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THE INDEPENDENT

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MONDAY 13 JANUARY 1997

WEATHER: Windy with showers

(IR45p) 40p

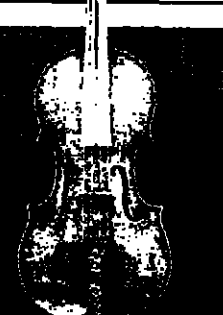
THE TABLOID

crowned at five, murdered at six



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ANALYSIS

What makes Henman win PAGE 14
plus 20-page sports section



Christmas rise in drink-driving revealed as bogus

Jason Bennetto and David Garfield

Motorists across Britain did heed the Government's anti-drink driving message this Christmas despite reports that the 1996 campaign was a flop, according to a survey carried out by *The Independent*.

A study of the 43 police forces in England and Wales suggests fewer people were driving while over the limit during the festive period. This finding directly contradicts the po-

lice's disclosure at the beginning of the month that the number of drunk drivers caught rose by 18 per cent compared with last year. But because of a new policy by the Association of Chief Police Officers, who control the statistics, forces no longer provide figures for the number of breath tests carried out during Christmas and therefore no direct comparison can be made.

However *The Independent* has obtained figures from 19 forces which reveal that 23 per cent more motorists were tested this year. This means that last year 47 out of every 1,000 drivers tested were over the limit, compared to about 43 per 1,000 this Christmas.

Critics of the police's new system have suggested that chief constables may be deliberately exaggerating the drink-drive problem in an attempt to gain greater powers to stop and breathealyse motorists.

Edmund King, head of campaigns for the motoring organisation RAC, said: "I would like to think the rea-

son behind this mess was incompetence on the part of the police and not an undercover plot. It might be, however, that they are pushing for a lowering of the limit and their findings might put pressure on the Department of Transport to do so."

Schools at top of Blair's election agenda

Colin Brown Chief Political Correspondent

Tony Blair yesterday pledged to drive through higher standards in education with the same zeal as the Tories pursued trade union reform in the Eighties. It will be "no holds barred, this is my passion," he said.

An education Bill imposing strict guidelines on homework and standards in schools would be the priority for the first Queen's Speech, the Labour leader said yesterday. He also announced that Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, would keep his job if Labour won the election, in spite of hostility from teachers he has criticised.

Beginning the second week of the pre-election campaign, Mr Blair stole the thunder of education ministers who are due to announce tomorrow new government guidance on homework which will stop short of prescribing the amount that

said: "Labour's commitments to our public services cannot be taken seriously while they continue to act like frightened rabbits caught in the Tory headlights every time a tax is mentioned. It is high time Labour put its money where its mouth is."

"There is a huge credibility gap between Tony Blair's desire to improve standards without putting up the additional money," Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, said.

Referring to Labour's proposed windfall tax on public utilities, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers said: "The education service at present is a threadbare. What it needs is a windfall on resources."

Brian Mawhinney, the Tory Party chairman, said Labour councils were failing to put Mr Blair's promises into practice. "That's not passion - that's hypocrisy," he said.

The Labour leader insisted that improvements could be achieved without increasing taxes to pay for higher spending commitments. Home and school contracts between parents and schools would cost nothing, he said. Labour is committed to reduce class sizes for all five-, six- and seven-year-olds by scrapping the assisted-places scheme.

"If at the end of five years we have made a definable difference to the way children are educated in this country, we will have done something of which we can be proud."



NEW HOMEWORK

schools should set their pupils. But Mr Blair's refusal to commit Labour to higher spending to pay for his plans for education on BBC1's *Breakfast with Frost* programme failed to convince some of the teaching trade unions that it would tackle the crisis of morale in the profession.

The Tories face a difficult week, with Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England, expected to press the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, for an increase in interest rates at their meeting on Wednesday, following continuing signs that the Christmas shopping spree is fuelling inflation. Tory MPs returning to the fray at Westminster today after their Christmas break also face the threat of Labour ambushes on Commons votes with "pairing" suspended.

But yesterday's announcement raised fresh questions about Labour's tax and spending plans. Liberal Democrat education spokesman Don Foster

said: "Labour's commitments to our public services cannot be taken seriously while they continue to act like frightened rabbits caught in the Tory headlights every time a tax is mentioned. It is high time Labour put its money where its mouth is."

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The wreckage of the Milan-Rome express train in which at least seven people died yesterday after it hurtled off the track into electricity pylons. The accident occurred as the train rounded a curve just outside the station at Piacenza, 40 miles from Milan. At least 60 were injured

Now Branson's rivals get a sinking feeling

Michael Streeter

Another balloon, another take-off, another failure. A rival attempt to go one better than Richard Branson and fly non-stop in a balloon around the world ended abruptly hours after lift-off yesterday when the two pilots were overcome by gas. The pair were rescued from the Mediterranean Sea off the French coast where they were forced to ditch the craft after kerosene fumes leaked into the cockpit. The failure of the men, one Swiss, one Belgian, came just five days after Mr Branson's own attempt ended over the Algerian desert only 19 hours into the flight.

Unkind observers wondered whether the presence of the businessman at the Swiss Alps launch of the latest flight may have doomed it to failure.

But just a few hours before the take-off at Château d'Oex, Mr Branson insisted: "They are very determined and although my son said he wants them to get 99 per cent of the way round the world tonight I wish they go 100 per cent around."

And after their unscheduled descent, the Virgin boss sympathised with their plight. "I know only too well how they must feel."

The £1m British-built *Breilung Orbiter* balloon hit the sea yesterday around six hours after a near-perfect lift-off in Switzerland. It had hoped to take advantage of the same jetstream winds that Branson had sought to propel it on its record-breaking voyage.

But disaster struck when kerosene leaked into the sealed cockpit of the helium-filled balloon after just a few hours. Although pilots Bertrand Picard and Wim Verstrueten quickly repaired the leak, they started to feel ill from the fumes. After their helicopter rescue the pair were taken to a medical centre near Montpellier, southern France, for treatment, before returning to Switzerland.

The second failure in under a week underlines just how hard, dangerous and expensive the challenge is, but Mr Branson said the quest would continue. "The race is now still on and I'm sure both us will be back again later this year, having learned from our difficulties."

Fifty million pennies from heaven

Rupert Cornwell Washington

What do you do if vast quantities of someone else's money rain from skies early one morning on to the street where you live. If the overwhelming reaction of one rundown district of inner-city Miami is anything to go by, the answer is simple. You keep it.

The miracle happened last Wednesday. A Brink's armoured truck, carrying \$3.7m (£2.2m) in bags of banknotes, coins and foodstuffs, crashed on a motorway overpass, sending part of its contents spilling over the parapet and down an

embankment, on to the impoverished pavement of North-west 17th Street.

Not surprisingly, word flashed around in an instant, and when police arrived a few minutes later, residents and passers-by had already scooped up vast quantities of the manna from heaven. In their efforts to get the money back, the Miami police at first appealed to human-kind's better instincts. Then they offered an amnesty, promising not to prosecute anyone who returned the cash within 48 hours. The deadline expired on Saturday, by which time just three people had handed anything back.

One was an 11-year old boy who turned 85 cents over to his teacher. Another was a firefighter who gave a policeman an unopened bag he found under a bush, stuffed with \$330,000 in cash. The real saint, though, was a single mother of six children called Faye McFadden, who returned \$19.53 in coins she had collected. "I wanted to set a good example for the kids."

That however was it. Still missing is an estimated \$500,000. But for a city rife with crime and public corruption, and crippled by a \$68m budget deficit, the rights and wrongs of the incident are anything but clearcut. "Which is more moral," asked

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news

Delays cause cremations crisis

Christian Wolmar

A recent and unexplained surge in the death rate is causing three-week delays in cremations in parts of South East England, particularly in Kent.

While there is generally an increase in the death rate during the winter months, one undertaker said the high death rate "was quite extraordinary and impossible to explain".

The delays are particularly marked in Kent where some people who died over Christmas will not be cremated until next week. Dominic Maguire, a

spokesman for the National Association of Funeral Directors, said that the difficulties "tend to happen most years" but in different places around the country. Last year, he said, there were long backlogs in Glasgow in the winter because of a flu outbreak, but the current problem is not a result of an epidemic.

The Independent contacted several funeral directors in Kent and found that the average delay was two weeks. While one funeral director mentioned the flu, most were unable to explain the increase in business. John

Weir, who runs the eponymous family undertakers in the Medway towns, said: "At one of the local crematoria, you couldn't get a place until 28 January. There is no doubt that funeral directors and crematoria across Kent and in parts of south London are very busy." He said there was no pattern to the deaths, with flu only having a marginal impact.

Another funeral director, in Maidstone, said: "It's been awful this past week. People are having to take slots at 9.30 in the morning, or four in the afternoon, which is awful for them."

There are also backlogs of bodies in Surrey and parts of south London and the recent cold weather is likely to further exacerbate the problem.

Mr Maguire said that the number of slots in crematoria was limited and was tailored towards an average number of deaths. Any unexpected increase led to delays. "We are not unduly concerned, although we sympathise with the relatives who want to get on with their lives," he said.

Fortunately, modern equipment, such as digging machines, ensure that people can be

buried despite the cold weather, but Mr Weir says there is very little call for burial these days, with only about 15 per cent of bodies being buried rather than cremated.

The re-use of old graves is proposed today in a report which claims burial space in London could run out in nine years unless urgent action is taken.

In some areas of the capital there is already no room and the dead have to be buried in other boroughs. The problem is particularly acute in the City of London, Hackney, Islington,

Lewisham, Kensington and Chelsea and Tower Hamlets. Even in the outer suburbs, some boroughs will run out of space by 2016.

And the report, commissioned by the London Planning Advisory Committee, the City of London Corporation and the Confederation of Burial Authorities, says the situation is most acute for Muslims, for whom only five years of grave space is left in inner London.

By contrast Roman Catholics and Jews, because of provision by their religious organisations, have no real problems.

significant shorts

Labour will ban foreign donations

Foreign donations to British political parties will be outlawed under Labour's plans to clean up party funding, Tony Blair made clear yesterday.

Labour says foreign donors contributed £15m to the Tory war chest before the last election. Asil Nadir, the fugitive head of the collapsed Polly Peck empire, has given to the party.

Mr Blair reaffirmed his commitment to press for funding to be reviewed by the Nolan Committee on public standards. "We believe there is a very strong case for making illegal the funding of political parties from abroad," he said on the BBC's *Breakfast with Frost*. Colin Brown

Accused nurses see their families

Two British nurses accused of murdering a colleague in Saudi Arabia were reunited with their families at a police station yesterday.

Lucille McLauchlan, 31, from Dundee, and Deborah Parry, 41, from Alton, Hampshire, who have been in jail for three weeks, had separate meetings with their families at Damman, the Foreign Office said.

Stan and Ann McLauchlan, from Dundee, appeared distressed. Mrs McLauchlan was in tears as they went through Heathrow airport on Saturday. Relatives of Miss Parry, 41, were thought to have been on the same flight. The nurses were initially said to have admitted killing Yvonne Gilford but then retracted the confessions. They could face the death penalty.

Jackson at home in Scotland

Michael Jackson has spent two days in Scotland looking for a castle to buy and make his home. The pop singer was reported to be particularly interested in Inverrossachs House, 10 miles from Callander, said to be for sale at £500,000. Another contender is thought to be £550,000 Glenmoyne House sitting in 14 acres near Galashiels in the Borders.

Insiders with the entourage said Jackson wants to raise the child he and his wife, Debbie Rowe, are expecting in the clear Scottish air.

Jackson visited Stirling Castle, which is not for sale, and stopped off at the town's McDonald's to buy "value meals" for him and his staff, though he stayed at a four-star hotel on Loch Lomond.

Tory rebels talk peace

Two Tory rebels who were angered by a government decision about a local hospital today met Stephen Dorrell, Secretary of State for Health. At least one could be brought back into the fold.

Sir John Gort, MP for Hendon North, said last month that he was withdrawing cooperation from the Government because of the treatment of a casualty unit at Edgware General Hospital. He will be joined at his meeting with Mr Dorrell by Hugh Dykes, Harrow East MP, who has been rumoured to be considering a similar protest.

Sir John said a firm enough pledge from Mr Dorrell could bring him back into the fold. He was seeing the minister at the request of the Chief Whip, Alastair Goodlad. Mr Dykes said: "I think it will be a positive meeting."

Troops search for girl, 9

A huge search was being carried out yesterday for a nine-year-old girl missing since Saturday morning. More than 100 troops and 70 police officers were engaged in a search for Zoe Evans, Warminster, Wiltshire.

Youth goes up in smoke

Striking evidence that smokers really do age faster has been found in a study of twins. Those who smoked were found to have skin up to 40 per cent thinner than their non-smoking brothers or sisters. Wrinkles are produced with age as the skin becomes thinner and more fragile. The new findings by doctors at St Thomas' Hospital, London, demonstrate that smoking hastens the process.

Record year for air deaths

Last year was the worst ever for air accidents. *Flight International* said that, excluding events caused by sabotage or hijack, commercial passenger and cargo airlines suffered a record 57 fatal accidents and 1,840 deaths, compared with 56 fatal accidents and 1,213 deaths in 1995.

Five share £10m

Five winners shared a £9.8m National Lottery jackpot, with £1,964,980 each. The winning numbers were 4, 11, 16, 18, 35 and 43. The bonus number was 39.

Hero's welcome for saved sailor

Robert Milliken
Farnham

Tony Bullimore, the British yachtsman rescued in the Southern Ocean last Thursday, was due to arrive in Fremantle Western Australia early today to a hero's welcome.

Mr Bullimore, 56, and Thierry Dubois, 29, a French yachtsman, were aboard the Australian navy frigate *HMAS Adelaide*, which rescued them both from the ocean 1,600 miles south west of Perth where their yachts capsized in mountainous seas a week ago.

A tumultuous welcome awaited Mr Bullimore and the Frenchman, from large crowds, the Australian government and military officials. But after a press conference, Mr Bullimore was expected to be taken to hospital for oxygen treatment to help his wounds heal.

Mr Bullimore's remarkable survival after four days in the darkened hull of his upturned yacht, the *Exide Challenger*, has left him with frostbite in his hands, nose and feet. He lost part of one finger during his ordeal, and is in danger of losing another.

His wife, Lalel, and family members were due to fly into Perth this morning to be reunited with Mr Bullimore after the official welcome.

Raydon Gates, the *Adelaide's* captain, said that Mr Bullimore had defied the ship's doctor's order to rest during the three-day voyage to Fremantle. "He was unable to contain himself," said Captain Gates. "He just wanted to walk around thanking the crew all the time."

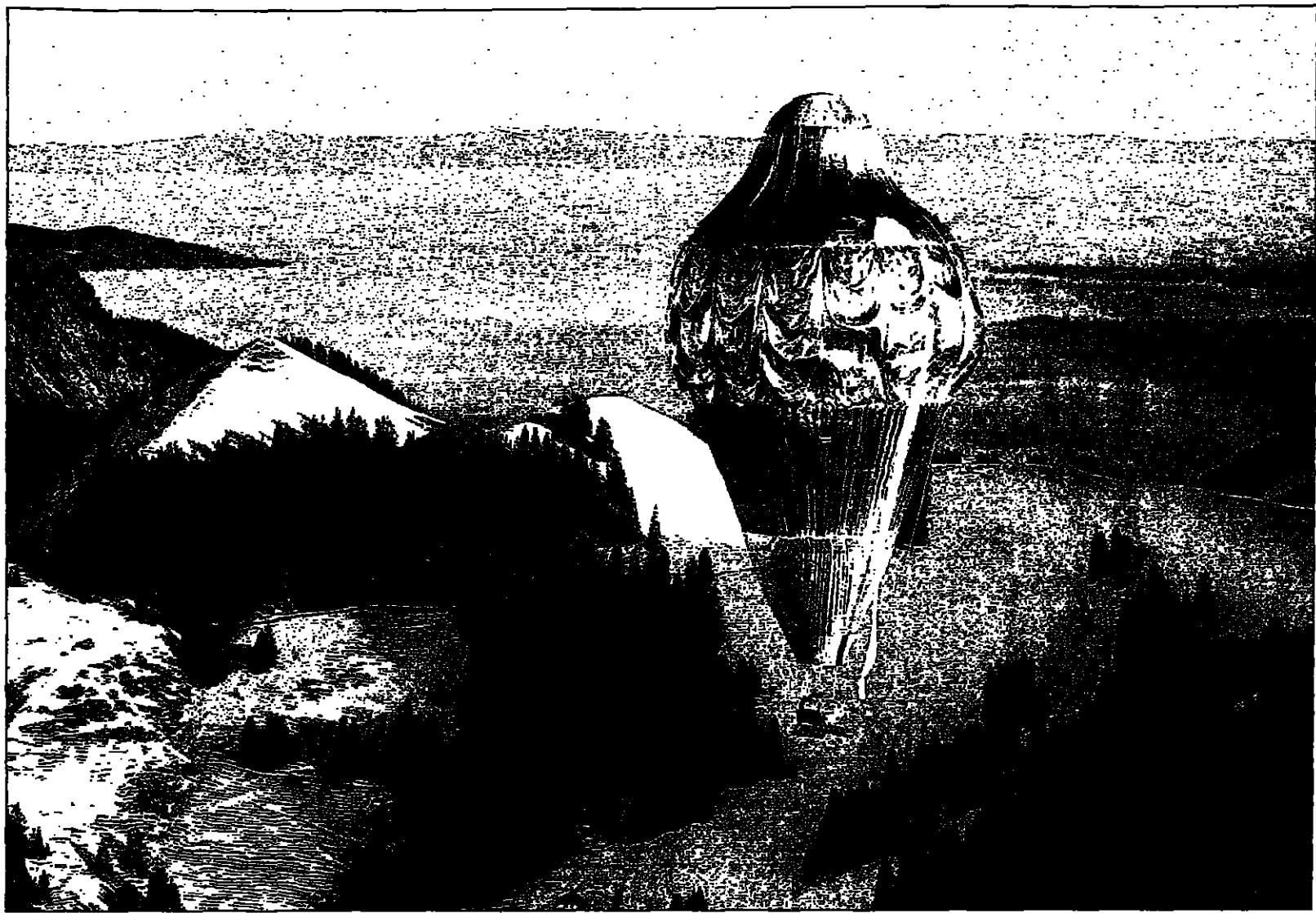
The search for the fourth casualty of the Vendée Globe singlehanded round-the-world race, French Canadian Gerry Rous, was abandoned yesterday, Stuart Alexander writes.

The 43-year-old, from Montreal, who won the monohull class of the 1996 Europe 1-Star singlehanded transatlantic race from Plymouth, Devon, to Newport, Rhode Island, has not been picked up by the French Argos satellite position logging system since last Tuesday.

All attempts to communicate with him by radio and fax have failed. No distress beacon has been logged by any of the emergency services.

The contrast with the success of picking up Mr Bullimore and Mr Dubois by the Australian Navy, and the rescue of Raphael Dincelli, another French yachtsman, by fellow British competitor Pete Goss, is being sorely felt at the race headquarters in Paris.

"Anything could have happened and we have to be optimistic," said race originator and organiser Philippe Jeantot.



Sky high: The Breitling Orbiter flying over Gruyere in the Swiss Alps. It had to ditch because the crew were overcome by gas Photograph: AP

Teachers wary of Labour's reforms

Lucy Ward
Education correspondent

Educationists and union leaders yesterday warned that an incoming Labour government would need to tackle the crisis of morale among teachers if education reforms were to succeed.

Responding to the announcement by the Labour leader, Tony Blair, that an education Bill would be his party's priority legislation, they said the proposals paid too little attention to teachers' weariness of change and renewed warnings that Labour would have to commit more resources to make the changes a reality.

Professor Peter Mortimore, director of London University's Institute of Education, said more money was needed to back up the

Crisis of morale and recruitment are identified as priorities in profession weary after decade of change

party's warm words. He said: "This will be much more convincing if it is accompanied by additional resources. Just saying it is a priority is not enough."

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters' Union of Women Teachers, said that his members would welcome moves to reduce class sizes and introduce headteachers' qualifications. But Mr Blair failed to realise how reform-weary teachers were. "Without additional resources a lot of the reforms he proposes are pie in the sky. Many of them require improvement in teachers' morale, and that is not going to

come cheaply. We require better conditions, better pay, overall more trust and less workload."

Labour's confirmation that the controversial Chief Inspector of Schools, Chris Woodhead, disliked by many in the education establishment, would keep his job if the party won the election indicated that it intended to continue the present government's policy of interfering unduly in schools' activities, Mr de Gruchy said. News that Mr Woodhead, best known for declaring that 15,000 teachers should be sacked for incompetence, is to stay will do little to raise morale. However, Labour sources yesterday insisted that

in recent months the chief inspector had shifted towards a less confrontational stance more in tune with the party's view that teachers needed support as well as pressure to improve.

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said an incoming Labour government would have to address the crisis of recruitment and morale. He said: "Teachers are thoroughly sick and tired of being battered by... perpetual criticism and by being expected to deliver higher and higher standards with less and less resources."

Educationists echoed union leaders' calls for a change of

style in education policy-making, switching a top-down approach for a stronger partnership with schools and local authorities. Professor Mortimore said: "I welcome the commitment to education, but warn both main parties that they need to handle education matters rather more sensitively than in the past. Teachers feel pushed and pulled around."

Birmingham's chief education officer, Professor Tim Brighouse, condemned the practice of "legislation followed by circular" from central government, which sapped teachers' energy. Speaking on BBC Radio 4 yesterday, Labour's education spokesman David Blunkett insisted that "success will lift morale as teachers know they are valued in doing the job of lifting standards".

Major hopes to head off sceptics at the pass

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

As he prepared to head up the Khyber Pass today, John Major, clearly had his mind on the issue allegedly still causing him sleepless nights at home.

He confided in the travelling party that he believed he knew how to resolve the question of "flexibility" - the troubled attempt to find a way of allowing EU member states to progress

in some policy areas at different speeds. "Yes, I can see a way of unlocking it," he said.

Mr Major added: "We still have to negotiate our way through. But I can see how it can be done. I will endeavour to see it is done in the discussions over the next few months." It may have been the curry, or the heat, or both. But

the "key" to unlocking the mysteries of flexibility was seen as nothing more than a mirage back home by Tory Euro-sceptic MPs.

Bill Cash warned it would lead to appeasement. He said: "We sold the pass at Maastricht Treaty by agreeing that we would never veto the other member states from going

ahead, while taking an opt-out ourselves. This is creating federalism, not stopping it."

"I think I will be able to make progress with that, yes. I doubt that progress will be finalised until Amsterdam. It is likely, as it was in Maastricht, it will all come together in the endgame, I would guess."

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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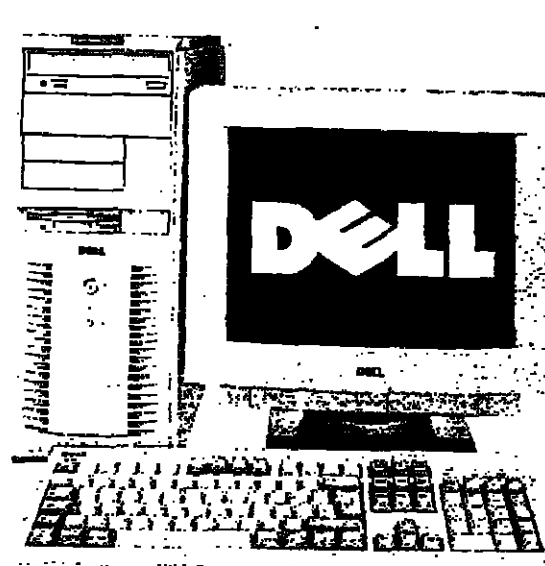
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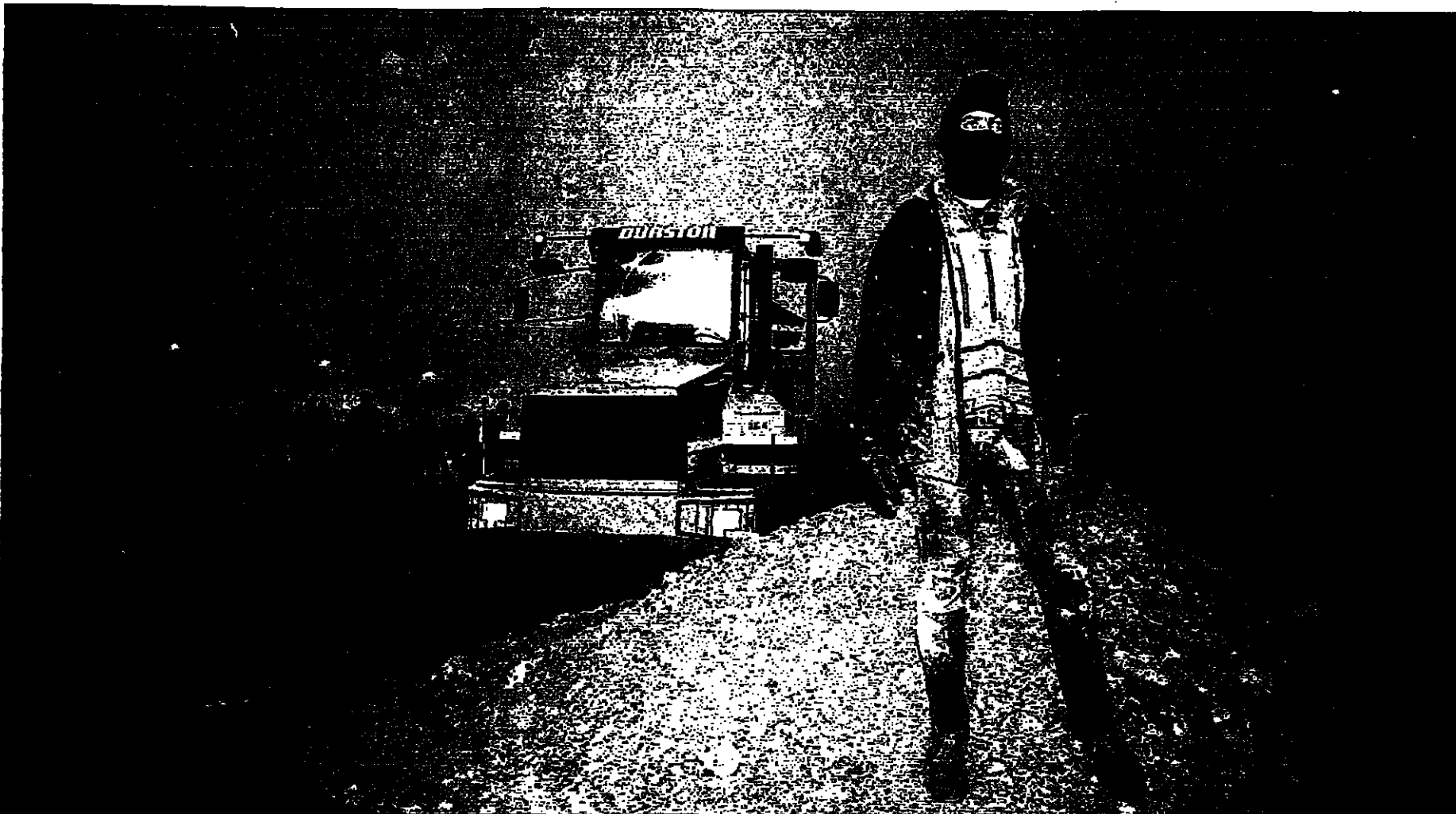
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It's not violence that Middle England won't tolerate, it's police snooping



Front line: Demonstrators watching as machinery is destroyed at the bypass site at Newbury while, right, sheriff's officers remove a protester chained to a concrete block at Honiton, Devon

Photographs: Justin Leighton/Tim Cuff

The clashes at Newbury will not deter affluent protesters, reports Jojo Moyes

As the operation to clean up burnt-out vehicles began near her home yesterday, Josephine Carter, an anti-roads protester, was feeling pensive.

"I was talking to my gardeners this morning and he was asking me what it was like [on Saturday]. I told him, it's like football crowds. Not all are hooligans, and yet that small number of people makes it seem so," she said.

As pictures of balacava'd agitators atop burning vehicles were broadcast, protesters were considering what they saw as a new development in the battle for hearts and minds over the Newbury bypass.

However, the middle-classes who have thrown their support

behind the protest are just as likely to be appalled by police tactics as the violence.

In scenes reminiscent of the poll tax riots in 1990, a rally on Saturday to mark the first anniversary of the protest against the Newbury bypass had erupted in violence. Following a peaceful demonstration, hundreds of demonstrators had stormed one of the contractor's compounds and set fire to offices and equipment.

The fall-out threatened to overshadow a peaceful protest in Devon yesterday, when 17 anti-road protesters were arrested as sheriff's officers

cleared the camp near Exeter, built in the path of a £65m road scheme. Taking advantage of the fact that many protesters had travelled to Newbury, 150 police and sheriff's officers had swooped on the camp at Honiton, where 20 protesters had locked themselves into tunnels and bunkers.

The organisation Friends of the Earth was among those who were quick to distance themselves from the violence at Newbury. Its spokesman, Charles Secrett, said: "Burning construction machinery is totally counter-productive to the anti-roads campaign and Friends of

the Earth condemn it utterly. "Scenes like these will discourage the millions in middle England who believe in environmental protection and who want the Government to do things differently."

He was right to be concerned. Much of the publicity surrounding the battle over the Newbury bypass has been gleaned from its high-profile, middle-class support. Figures such as Tracy Ward, the Marchioness of Worcester, and Bel Mooney, wife of Jonathan Dimbleby, have joined the protest and contributed to the sanitising of direct-action politics, shifting its image from the public perception of "dreadlocks and dogs on strings".

But the middle England of which Mr Secrett spoke appeared to be made of sterner and more suspicious stuff.

Elise Cope, 23, a business development manager, lives just outside Newbury. She left the rally after it had officially finished, she said, and was "horrified" to see the scenes on the television afterwards.

"I don't think it was done by any of the local supporters. I think it's done purposefully because we've been getting so much public support," she said.

"It's definitely done with the intention of putting people off. Now the vast majority of people are reading the newspapers and saying 'typical, violence', and I say it's not true. But we're not going to be able to prove it or stop it."

Police, who made several arrests, were not able to comment on who they thought was responsible for the violence but noted that the majority of protesters were "well-behaved".

Jill Eisele, a teacher who lives in Newbury, suggested that the rally may have been hijacked by a "rabble-rousing element", as happened in the poll

tax riots. If that were so, she said yesterday, it would be because local politicians had stirred up feeling against the protesters.

She said that the possibility of violence would not deter her from protesting against the road, which she had done for five years. But she admitted that there were many people who, having witnessed Saturday's scenes, might be less keen.

"I think there are people who are less committed. Certainly there were people there who when they saw the criminal damage occurring thought 'Oh my God, what am I doing here?'. But by the same token

I think you could speak to any middle-class people there, who might well be offended by the firebombing, but who will also tell you the police were extremely heavy-handed."

She had spoken to a number of neighbours, and claimed that most of them were alarmed not so much by the violence, but by the police presence in the town in the lead up to the anniversary.

"People have been amazed at the police presence in Newbury for the last week. They were filming everywhere, filming people as they were getting off the train," she said. "Middle-class people hate being filmed. More than anything. They find it very invasive, very offensive. Now that was very upsetting."

Quiz reveals everything that you didn't want to know about Channel 5

Michael Streeter

Welcome to the age of the Mezzobrow.

Such a person is intelligent, perhaps even academic, but above all knows the answers to some of the most pressing questions of modern-day life.

For example, which band is number one in the charts? (Spice Girls with "2 Become 1"), where would you find Radio Five Live (693 and 909MW) and who presents *Ready Steady Cook*? (Fero Britton).

If you know the answers to these and other similarly weighty questions, then you may just be the person Channel 5 television is seeking.

The new terrestrial television station, due to start broadcasting at the end of March, has introduced written tests for job applicants which involve knowledge less of Homer, than of Homer Simpson. (You have to name all five members of television's Simpson family, too.)

Channel 5's rationale is that rather than simply testing general knowledge, they want to find out just how embedded prospective employees are in modern culture. Their spokeswoman Danielle Noy said: "It's as much about attitude as aptitude. Channel 5 is about blurring class and generational barriers, and not about being up or downmarket, but about having a modern overview of life." She added: "The kind of people we're looking for are high-brow, lowbrow and in between. We're looking for 'mezzobrow'."

The mezzo (definition: half or medium) person is also expected to be able to name the five members of Spice Girls, know which television station features topless darts, identify the two lead characters (and their actors) from *The X-Files*, and recognise just whom David Gifford, Viviana Durante and Andy Gomarsall are.

Perhaps most importantly, for a would-be TV person and the world of power-lunching, applicants are asked to name at

The Mezzomind questions

1. What is number one in the charts today?
2. Who is Israel's prime minister?
3. How many Fugees are there?
4. Who edits the Sun?
5. Who wrote (a) *Princess in Love* (b) *La Traviata* (c) *A Brief History of Time* (d) *The Great Gatsby* (e) *High Fidelity* (f) *Money*?
6. Who is (a) Viviana Durante (b) Gaz Coombes (c) Ray Gardner (d) David Gifford (e) Andy Gomarsall?
7. Who is Peter Powell married to?
8. What is his connection with Caron Keating?
9. On what frequency would you find Radio Five Live?
10. Can you name all five of the Simpsons?
11. What is ITV scheduling against?
12. Name the following people's other halves (or exes) and recent offspring: (a) Paula Yates (b) Madonna (c) Imran Khan (d) Pamela Anderson
13. Who Sponsors League Division One?
14. Who presents *Ready Steady Cook*?
15. Who or what is an agent provocateur?
16. Name five Conran restaurants
17. Where in London would you find the Prada shop?

Answers: (1) Spice Girls - "2 Become 1" (2) Benjamin Netanyahu (3) three (4) Stuart Higgins (5a) Anna Pasternak (5b) Verdi (5c) Stephen Hawking (5d) F Scott Fitzgerald (5e) Mick Jagger (5f) Galliano (6) Lead singer, Supersmash (7) Fero Britton (8) Caron Keating (9) 693 and 909 MW (10) Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa and Maggie (11) *Shogun* (12a) Michael Hutchence and Heavenly Hiraani Tiger Lily (12b) Carlos Leon and Lourdes (12c) Jemima Goldsmith and Sulaiman Isa (12d) Tommy Lee and Brandon (12e) Nationwide (12f) Fern Britton (13) an underwear shop and a band (14) Mezzo, Quagmire, The Blueprint Café, Candina del Ponte, Le Port de la Tour, Butler's Wharf, Chop House or Bibendum (15) Sloane Street

...and a few from the viewers

To help her *The Independent*, tongue firmly in cheek, has come up with a few questions for candidates about Channel 5:

1. Why isn't the channel already on air as promised last year?
2. Do we need another television station?
3. Why haven't I had my video re-tuned yet?

least five Terence Conran restaurants.

Ms Noy, who confesses the questions reflect some of her personal tastes, said the 50-question test had been "phenomenally" useful since it had introduced people with a keen interest in modern culture and shown the more rounded candidates.

On a more basic level, the questions had shown up some appalling lack of knowledge of the television industry - such as

the applicants who did not know the name of the chief executive of Channel 5 itself (David Elstein). Many applicants had regarded the examination as a "ritual humiliation" and more than one had refused to take part at all.

There were also some amusing answers. When asked whom Lori Miles was, someone had described her as a porn actress, another stated that she was a super model. She is, of course, editor of *TV Quick* magazine. And perhaps predictably at

least one candidate was confused as to the authorship of *Princess in Love*. "Wasn't it one of Tolstoy's relatives?" queried one.

Charlie Parsons, managing director of the television production company Planet 24, which uses similar tests for graduate trainees, agreed with the philosophy behind them. "I think if people are going to be working in television on information programmes then they should have a good idea of the popular culture agenda."

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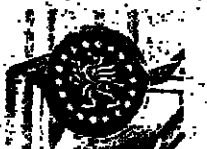
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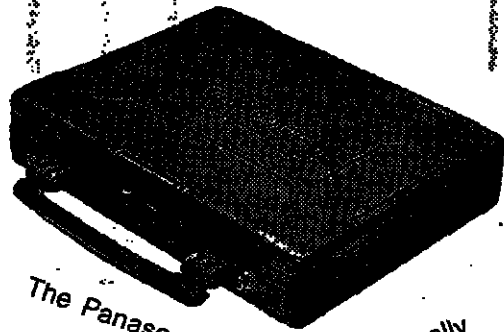
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Ulster talks resume amid air of pessimism and violence

Nationalist anger at IRA attacks is only good sign for authorities, reports David McKittrick

Political talks are due to resume in Belfast today amid pessimism about both their prospects for progress and the general security situation, with the IRA seemingly intent on escalating its violence.

A mortar attack on an RUC station in Fermanagh on Saturday caused no injuries but served to underline the continuing security threat. It was the latest in a series of IRA attacks which have resulted in increased security measures throughout Northern Ireland.

One heartening sign for the authorities, however, lies in the fact that the IRA in Belfast felt impelled at the weekend to warn members of the public against giving information to the police.

A statement said: "Over the past number of weeks the Belfast brigade of the IRA has become aware that a number of people in the Belfast area have compromised operations and placed the lives of volunteers in danger."

These individuals have informed the RUC of the presence of volunteers in our area by phone, even after our volunteers made it clear to them who they represented. The IRA will take action against anyone placing the lives of our volunteers in danger in this way."

With a string of IRA attacks recently ending in failure, the statement seems to authenticate reports that the terrorist organisation is suffering from decreasing tolerance of its violent activities. This in turn provides evidence to support the theory that even some republican sympathisers strongly disapprove of the violence.

While this in itself will certainly not be enough to turn the IRA away from terrorism, it constitutes an ominous warning to republican leaders that even in the ghettos they cannot depend on automatic support for their actions.



The remains of the van used to launch the mortar attack on an RUC station at Tempo, Co Fermanagh. No one was hurt Photograph: Brian Little/PA

In Saturday's attack two mortars were fired from a van at an unmanned police station in the village of Tempo. One landed on the station roof and the other in a yard, but neither exploded. A number of people were in the vicinity at the time, including children taking part in music lessons.

A few hours earlier SDLP leader John Hume and Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams had met for talks on the peace process. Sinn Féin said later that although the two parties had not agreed on an election pact the two leaders were determined to continue working together.

This morning the SDLP, together with eight other parties and representatives of the British and Irish governments, will meet at Stormont to reconvene political talks which had been adjourned over the Christmas period.

One of the first items of business is expected to be an attempt by the Rev Ian Paisley to have the fringe loyalist parties, the Ulster Democratic party and the Progressive Unionists, expelled from the talks.

Although the parties insist that the loyalist ceasefire is still in force, security sources say the illegal Ulster Defence Associ-

ation, with which the UDP is associated, was responsible for two car boobytrap bomb attacks on republicans.

Mr Paisley has said that he intends to raise the issue with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Sir Patrick Mayhew, and will take it to the prime minister if he does not receive a satisfactory response.

Sir Patrick has studiously avoided blaming the loyalists for the two attacks, and it is clear that he and most of the other parties will be against any move to have them ejected from the talks.

The talks themselves, mean-

while, have generated much cynicism among the public, the widespread perception being that they have made little or no progress since they started last June.

They remain dogged by the arms decommissioning issue. The main nationalist and Unionist parties - the SDLP and David Trimble's Ulster Unionists - have for some time been involved in a series of meetings to find an agreed position on how the issue should be handled.

So far success has eluded them, and many believe the deadlock is unlikely to be

broken this side of the general election. It is possible, however, that the chairman of the talks, the former US Senator George Mitchell, might act on his own initiative in an attempt to move things forward.

There is as yet no formal agreement on when and how the talks should be drawn to a close once the general election is called. Most parties are anxious to preserve the present format in the hope that new life can be breathed into the process after the election. They will thus probably try to find an arrangement for the talks to be suspended rather than wound up.

Blair bullish over windfall tax threat

Diane Coyle and Colin Brown

The Labour Party said yesterday that privatised companies would have to pay a windfall tax on their profits despite a new threat that a handful of the firms, including Anglian Water and Eastern Electricity, might challenge the legality of the tax in European courts.

Dismissing the legal threat to Labour's plans, Tony Blair said on BBC1's *Breakfast with Frost*: "There is not going to be a cash gap. We have had legal advice on this. That is very, very clear indeed. There is no doubt that the excess profits are there."

The Labour leader made it clear that he believed the tax, which could raise between £3bn and £5bn, would prove a vote

Even if some electricity and water companies did go ahead with a challenge, they would have to pay the tax in the meantime.

Referring to a report commissioned by Aims for Industry, a right-wing group, which claimed that Labour was vulnerable on legal grounds, a spokesman for Mr Brown said: "Any conceivable challenge under European law or the European convention would be utterly futile and a complete waste of time and money."

Any possible proceedings under European law could take more than a decade to reach a conclusion, during which the affected businesses would be liable to pay the tax.

Many of the privatised companies have accepted that they will have to pay if Labour wins the general election. Some have started to make financial provisions for it - along with the extra tax levied in last November's Budget from changed rules for the depreciation of investment in long-lived assets.

The privatised companies have started to concentrate their lobbying efforts on the far more important issues of regulation and competition policy under a Labour government. The amounts of money at stake in these areas are far higher than the likely proceeds from the windfall tax.

Labour advisers regard the latest salvo over the tax as another stage in the campaign against it by a hard core of businessmen. The party's intention to introduce it if it wins the election was unshaken by the weekend report from Aims for Industry, written by two eminent lawyers.

Alistair Darling, a Labour Treasury spokesman, said on BBC Radio 4: "We are satisfied there is no possibility of a successful challenge in domestic or European law. We are also satisfied there is no possibility of a challenge under the European convention. People should understand that the windfall tax is not up for negotiation: it is not up for grabs. We intend to legislate for it."

There is not going to be a cash gap... there is no doubt the excess profits are there

winner at the election, with the money being allocated to a special fund for tackling long-term unemployment.

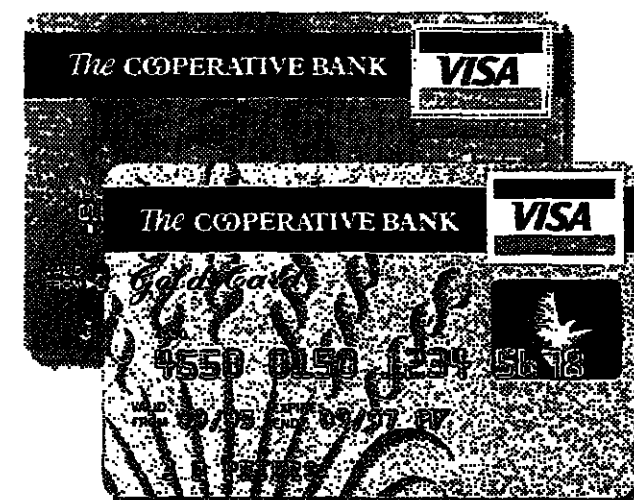
Some of the water companies who would pay had been bought from abroad, he said. The campaign against the tax was being mounted partly by the Conservative Party and by the utilities, he added.

A spokesman for the shadow Chancellor, Gordon Brown, said legal experts had advised Labour that the only real possibility of a challenge was through the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, and this was unlikely to be able to proceed. The Strasbourg court has always been wary about accepting cases that involve questions of national tax policy.

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Jaws of England: A sea lion nibbles at the flippers of a diver on the new underwater nature trail off Whitley Bay Photographs: North News & Pictures

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Fayed: 'Ethical' politics

lowing his backing for anti-abortion candidates and for the *Christian Democrat*, the newspaper of the Movement for Christian Democracy, which is also "pro-life" and campaigns vigorously against screen violence. Mr Graffius was general secretary of the Movement for Christian Democracy until the start of this month, when he also left his job as assistant to David Alton, the "pro-life" Liberal Democrat MP for Liverpool Mossley Hill, whose seat is to disappear at the election. But Mr Graffius told *The Independent* the trust would not be specifically Christian, and would be nothing to do with "right-wing moral majority" politics.

"It will have no faith foundation, although the agenda will appeal to people of all faiths and none," he said. It would make sense to many "in-

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45-101



Sea change: Historians think Cabot may have landed in Massachusetts, not Newfoundland Photograph: Mary Evans Picture Library

New-found doubts cloud Cabot's royal celebrations

Michael Streeter

It was a defining moment in this country's history, the point at which Britain's fledgling empire began. The Genoese-born merchant John Cabot stepped ashore in June 1497 to claim new-found territories across the Atlantic for the English crown.

History generally accepts that this *terra incognita* was Newfoundland, a "discovery" important enough for the Queen to travel to Canada this summer to mark the 500th anniversary of Cabot's voyage.

But this has rekindled academic debate over whether Her Majesty is travelling to the correct spot. Some experts doubt whether Cabot really arrived at land which is today Canada; and one doubts whether he even crossed the Atlantic at all.

As boat-builders put the finishing touches to a replica of his flagship, *The Matthew*, which in May will retrace Cabot's journey, the Canadian historian and writer Michael Bradley said: "I think there is evidence he may have faked the whole thing."

"And if he did make the voyage he certainly didn't reach the latitudes

[Newfoundland] claimed for him. He would have hit the continent hundreds of miles to the south."

Mr Bradley, whose book on the quest by Europeans to cross the ocean, *Holy Grail Across the Atlantic*, is in its fifth print run, said there are compelling reasons to doubt Cabot's journey. One is the lack of any documentation such as a log book, except for a couple of letters from Cabot.

The explorer's descriptions of the temperate climate did not fit with Newfoundland, and he failed to bring back any souvenirs to substantiate a supposed encounter with a local chieftain. Mr Bradley also said that due to "westward variation", a phenomenon blighting early explorers, Cabot would have "dropped his latitude" by more than 400 miles. This means that the land he found was Massachusetts.

Mr Bradley said the British only revived an interest in Cabot 200 years later when they needed his "discovery" to validate their claims against the French to New France. Mr Bradley said: "If the Queen is joining in these celebrations then she is following in the footsteps

of a political travesty of history." The author ACH Smith, who has written about Cabot's son Sebastian, agrees that history romanticised Cabot. "He is regarded as this keen-eyed, intrepid explorer. Balls. He was a ... normal merchant who was in it for what he could get out of it."

Some people in Bristol, where Cabot was based, feel the celebrations are getting out of hand. On 2 May, the Queen will be on board *The Matthew* as it sails through Bristol docks to begin its journey west.

Ann Charles, of the *Matthew Project*, which is behind the voyage, said they were convinced that Cabot had reached Newfoundland. And a spokesman for the Canadian High Commission in London was also adamant. "We have an unshakeable belief that he went to Newfoundland and the celebrations will continue."

Professor Alan Williams, of Birmingham University and an acknowledged expert on the subject, said the evidence was inconclusive but pointed more to Newfoundland as the land Cabot reached. However, he added: "We will probably never know for sure where Cabot landed."

Medical firms use £70m tax loophole

Insurers say policies which gain exemption are supported by DTI

Christian Wolmar
Westminster Correspondent

Private medical insurance companies are exploiting a loophole to avoid paying insurance tax worth £70m per year to the exchequer.

Because long-term policies are exempt from the insurance tax, health insurers are encouraging people to sign up for contracts for more than one year.

PPP, the second largest health insurance company, with 2 million policyholders, says that its new policy which avoids the insurance premium tax is its biggest selling product. It has signed up more than 250,000 people in 150 companies to the scheme since it started at the beginning of last year. Bupa has followed up by running a similar scheme. Both are available only to people who receive their private medical insurance from their employers, who consist of 60 per cent of the 6.5 million policyholders.

In last November's budget, the Chancellor increased insurance premium tax from 2.5 per cent to 4 per cent, thus increasing the incentive to try to avoid it. PPP manages to offer its "tax-efficient" policy to companies by signing them up to five-year contracts to insure their employees.

According to PPP, "under the current regime, Long Term Employee Health care does not attract insurance premium tax which is levied on annual private medical insurance policies, or VAT which can be levied on annual private medical insurance policies or VAT which can be levied on administrative services of healthcare trusts."

The opening up of these loopholes is an embarrassment for the Government as it appears to be tacitly encouraging private medical insurance.

PPP says that its scheme is approved by the Department of Trade and Industry as a long-term policy exempt from the tax. A spokesman for the DTI confirmed that this was the case, but said that the decision on tax liability was up to Customs and Excise.

However, at the time of the passage of the Finance Bill introducing the tax in 1994, the then Paymaster General, Sir John Cope, said that such attempts to avoid insurance premium tax would not be successful. In the committee hearing on the Bill, Sir John said in reply to a question about eligibility: "The Honourable Gentleman [Malcolm Chisholm, MP for Edinburgh Leith] asked whether Bupa would be able to get around tax by reclassifying itself as a long-term insurer. Yes, it will be included in the tax and no, it will not be able to get round it."

PPP's view that its policy is tax exempt is also being challenged from within the industry. Julian Stainton, chief executive of Western Provident, said: "These companies are trying to call a swan an ostrich. They cannot get round the tax by setting up so-called long-term schemes because they are a sham."

He pointed out that what was on offer was not really long-term insurance since the cover applied only to employees and those who left were no longer covered. He has taken legal advice from a QC who assures him that the schemes should be taxed and is to ask the Government to ensure that the tax is levied.

Mr Stainton said: "We are bemused. The Government says it wants this tax to be levied, but it seems to be deliberately allowing these loopholes to be created."

DAILY POEM

Person Specification

By Sophie Hannah

The ideal candidate for the position of soulmate to the all-important you should say she loves you, of her own volition, every five minutes, and it should be true.

She must be motivated and ambitious but feminine. She will be good at art, at homely things. Her meals should be nutritious. The ideal candidate will win your heart

with her prowess in bed. She will look stunning in public, turn at least ten heads per day. She should do most of (if not all) the running and be prepared for marriage straight away.

Points will be lost for boring occupations, excessive mood swings, drugs and other men. To those who fail, your deep commiserations. This post will not be advertised again.

Today's poem comes from Sophie Hannah's *Hotels Like Houses* (Corgi), her second published collection. Born (in 1971) and educated in Manchester, she is currently writer-in-residence at the city's Portico Library.

U.S. candidate wins British election.

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SERBIA

"Every day that passes without a resolution gives us more ammunition," said Miodrag Perisic, vice-president of the opposition Democratic Party, "and makes the international community more convinced that he has to go."



Whoever ultimately assumes responsibility for the country's future will face an uphill struggle. With 90 per cent of the economy still in state hands, Bulgaria has yet to implement the privatisation programmes long since in place in most of their more prosperous former Warsaw Pact allies such as Poland and Hungary.

The police are still a cause of concern for S-For peacekeepers. The new President of Republika Srpska, Biljana Plavsic, is understood to have achieved control over the Bosnian-Serb army from her base in Banja Luka but the police are still partly dominated by Radovan Karadzic.


For the moment, both S-For and the former warring factions are frozen in place by the weather. The temperature has been -15C during the day, dropping to -30C at night.

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Videotape epic reels out intimations of mortality for 'excellent' Comrade Deng

Teresa Poole
Peking

There was just one thing missing. Twelve hour-long television episodes on the life of Deng Xiaoping ended last night - with no new footage of the 92-year-old patriarch himself.

As propaganda, the fact that no recent film or photographs were included is bound to rekindle speculation about the health of the man who 17 years ago launched China's economic reform and opening up. Last week the foreign-ministry spokesman repeated the standard official formula: "For an old man, he is doing relatively well." Not well enough for the cameras, however. The most recent picture shown was a previously published photograph of Mr Deng privately watching the 1 October 1994 National Day celebrations. This time film footage of fireworks had been superimposed on the image to fatten things up.

Why then, did Peking broadcast this epic just now? Despite reminders about Mr Deng's mortality, the official message is clear for the 200-odd million Chinese reportedly glued to their sets nightly since 1 January. The Communist Party's version of Mr Deng's life is supposed to underscore its own claim to legitimacy.

In particular, the film sets the mood for 1997, which the leadership has deemed doubly significant, because of the return of Hong Kong on 1 July and the party congress in autumn.

The specific beneficiary of this effort is President Jiang Zemin, repeatedly featured in the series as the man to whom Mr Deng handed the baton at the end of the 1980s. Mr Jiang



Touchy issue: The series could not ignore Tiananmen; Deng (right) was shown later addressing party elders



unknown numbers killed.

Mr Deng was, however, shown at length addressing party and military elders on 9 June 1989, five days after the assault, when he was trying to defend his economic-reform programme.

"This storm was bound to happen sooner or later ... The basic point of reform and opening up is not wrong," he insisted. In the end, the documentary stressed a line of descent from Mao to Mr Deng, and now to Mr Jiang - as was necessary to uphold the argument that, despite upheavals and policy reversals since 1949, the Party has a rightful claim to people's loyalty. Mr Jiang said one of Mr Deng's greatest contributions was the "correct assessment of Chairman Mao, and maintaining the historical position of Mao thought". Mr Deng himself spent most of his life trying to resist the sort of personality cult that had enveloped Mao. He is now too infirm to prevent others invoking his memory to bolster their own political ends.

Mr Deng is, however, only 170 days away from living long enough for China to regain Hong Kong. Whether he could be fit enough to visit it seems doubtful, despite a wish expressed in 1990, and broadcast on the series: "I will try to live until 1997 ... I also wish in 1997, after China takes back Hong Kong, that I can go to Hong Kong, [when it is] our own land, walk a bit, and have a look around."

wound up the series last night with his verdict: "Comrade Deng is really an excellent Marxist and a firm Communist."

Few would deny, on evidence of the footage, that he had more charisma than the present politburo combined. There were the well-known images of Mr Deng's 1979 trip to America, when he donned a stetson and kissed children. And there were less familiar scenes. Thrice removed from power during party upheavals, Mr Deng told US journalists on that visit: "If there is an Olympic medal for a person who comes back to position again and again, I can get the gold."

Mr Deng can take the credit for restoring some semblance of sanity to the ideological madhouse of Mao's China and raising living-standards of most Chinese. But, in a country where historical truth remains under firm party control, the life itself was subject to editing. The Chinese film crew recorded every site of Mr Deng's sojourn in France during the 1920s, but there was barely any mention of his next stop, in the Soviet Union. Also written out was Mr Deng's second wife, who ran off with another Communist leader.

More tellingly, his role in the anti-Rightist movement of 1957, in which tens of thousands were persecuted, was ignored. Mao's Great Leap Forward (1958-61) killed an estimated 30 million through famine, another fact not aired. Criticism of Mao's mistakes was muted, except for strident comments from the party elder Bo Yibo. Between 1956 and the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, China "went backwards", said Mr Bo. Mr Deng was quoted as saying the Cultural Revolution, when he was under house arrest and then sent to Jiangxi province, was his "most painful" period. There was no real explanation of why it took two years for him to establish him-

self and his reform programme after the death of Mao in 1976, against the opposition of hard-line leftists.

Nor was there any mention of the Democracy Wall protest movement in the Seventies. Instead, much time was spent pronouncing that market reforms could still be called socialism.

The one sensitive topic which could not be ignored was the pro-democracy demonstrations of 1989. Footage of students in Tiananmen Square was shown briefly, and described as "an unusual political movement". No mention was made of the decision to send in the army, or the

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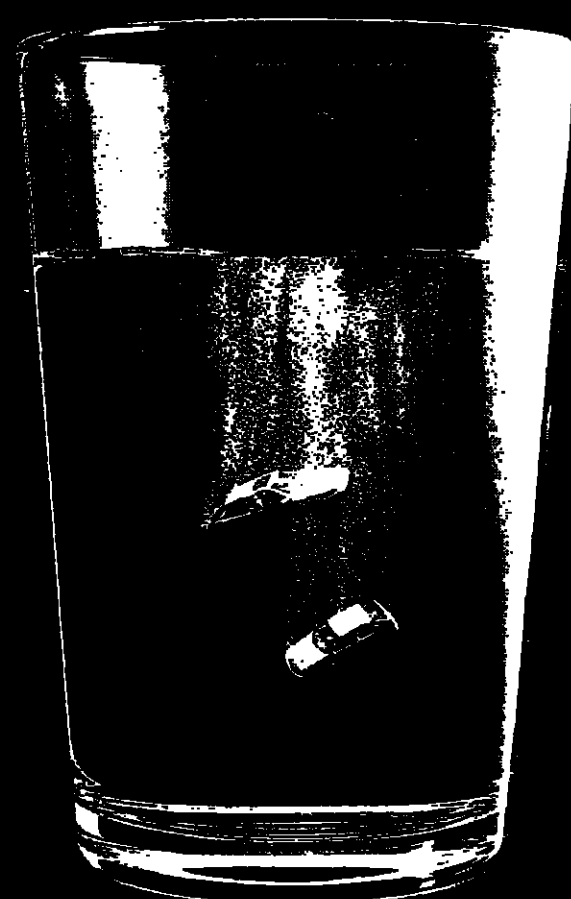
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international

Dilemma day for Seoul as strikes harden

Richard Lloyd Parry
Seoul

It may prove to be a decisive moment for South Korea. As the labour crisis enters its third week, President Kim Young Sam's government faces a dilemma. Will it use force to arrest union leaders, provoking violence and alienating the public? Or will it choose to stand its ground and face the biggest and costliest general strike in the country's history?

The consequences of the first option were made clear yesterday in clashes between police and trade unionists outside Myongdong Roman Catholic cathedral in central Seoul. Within its grounds, seven trade-union leaders, wanted by police over infringement of new labour laws, were in tents, guarded by hundreds of supporters. Since Christmas the unionists have made regular and noisy processions through the adjoining neighbourhood, Seoul's most fashionable shopping district. When 1,000 riot police blocked their way yesterday, they were pelted with stones and attacked with iron pipes. The street was turned into a battlefield of drifting tear-gas and weeping shoppers.

If, as many unionists fear, police violate the cathedral sanctuary and take the seven men by force, the reaction would be many times more violent. But the main alternative is equally dismal: unless there is a last-minute settlement, tomorrow will bring a redoubled strike, involving as many as 1.2 million workers in some of the country's key industries.

This would be a nightmare for any government, but it is difficult to feel much sympathy for President Kim and his New Korea Party (NKP). The trouble began on Boxing Day when, after lengthy delaying tactics by the opposition, two troublesome items of legislation were finally passed by the National Assembly. The first was a revision of the labour law, allowing employers new freedom to lay



Kim: Caught in a cleft stick

off workers and break up strikes. The second was a revision of the internal-security act, granting expanded powers to the National Security Planning Agency, the former Korean CIA.

Both pieces of legislation have their supporters, what provoked fury was the manner of their passing – at dawn, in secret, when the members of the opposition, who had persistently blocked the law, were, literally, asleep.

The strikes began that day: at their peak, before easing off over the New Year, 350,000 workers were out, including journalists, assembly-line personnel and employees of credit-card companies.

So far the strikers have been affiliates of an illegal union, the 500,000-strong Korean Confederation of Trade Unions. But now 1.2 million members of the authorised, and habitually docile, Federation of Korean Trade Unions are threatening to join the action with a two-day stoppage which would affect public transport, the mint and the telecommunications network.

By Saturday the strikes were reckoned to have cost \$2bn (£1.25bn) in lost production, and \$345m in exports. The new laws have been condemned by international labour organisations and human-rights groups, and concern has been expressed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, to which South

Korea was admitted last month.

The government argues that new flexibility in the labour markets is essential if the country is to remain competitive in the face of shrinking growth.

The intelligence service's new powers are justified by the incident in September when men from a North Korean submarine came ashore undetected east of Seoul. To many, though, they are worrying signs of a regime that sends confusingly mixed signals about its commitment to South Korea's young democracy. "They will come in, with the police and the army," predicted a trade unionist at the cathedral yesterday. "They will come and outnumber us in the middle of the night."



Giving it stick: Protesters clashing with police yesterday in the Myongdong district of Seoul as the crisis entered its third week. Photograph: Reuters

Israelis stand rocklike on road to peace

Patrick Cockburn
Bethlehem

Just south of Bethlehem an excavator, protected by Israeli troops, was yesterday placing rocks, each weighing over a tonne, on a newly tarmacked road built in the last week to connect a string of Palestinian villages with the main highway.

"There are 1,000 people living here at Jawat el-Shamat and with the roads closed there is no way in and no way out," said Said Hindi, a teacher, as he watched villagers move smaller boulders to allow a doctor to drive into the village.

The Israeli civil administration said the roads to Jawat el-Shamat were closed because they were built without Israeli permission and were unsafe for traffic. But Palestinians see it as symbolising a growing confrontation with a hostile Israeli government, determined not

from Hebron. On a surprisingly upbeat note, the US embassy in Tel Aviv said: "Dennis Ross ... feels the mediation role has been achieved, the assignment is complete." It added: "The gap [between the two parties] is minute."

Mr Ross's mission can be interpreted as a success only if it is seen as being concerned almost exclusively with Hebron.

But the Palestinians say they see the US as the guarantors of the interim agreement as a whole, also known as Oslo II, signed with Israel in 1995, under which the Israeli army was to redeploy from all Palestinian villages as well as Hebron. Saeb Erekat, the Palestinian negotiator, said: "The main sticking-point is not something easy. It is the nucleus of the interim agreement. It is the further redeployments."

Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, is concerned that once a deal is signed on Hebron, international pressure on Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, will dissipate. Two-thirds of the 1.3 million Palestinians on the West Bank would remain under Israeli control without further withdrawals.

The Palestinians are increasingly critical of Mr Ross as being biased towards Israel. One observer said: "All he does is translate Israeli demands into English, and we can speak that language anyway." Mohammed Bassouni, the Egyptian ambassador to Israel, was quoted as saying Mr Ross "is inclined towards Israel's side on certain issues and is no longer objective".

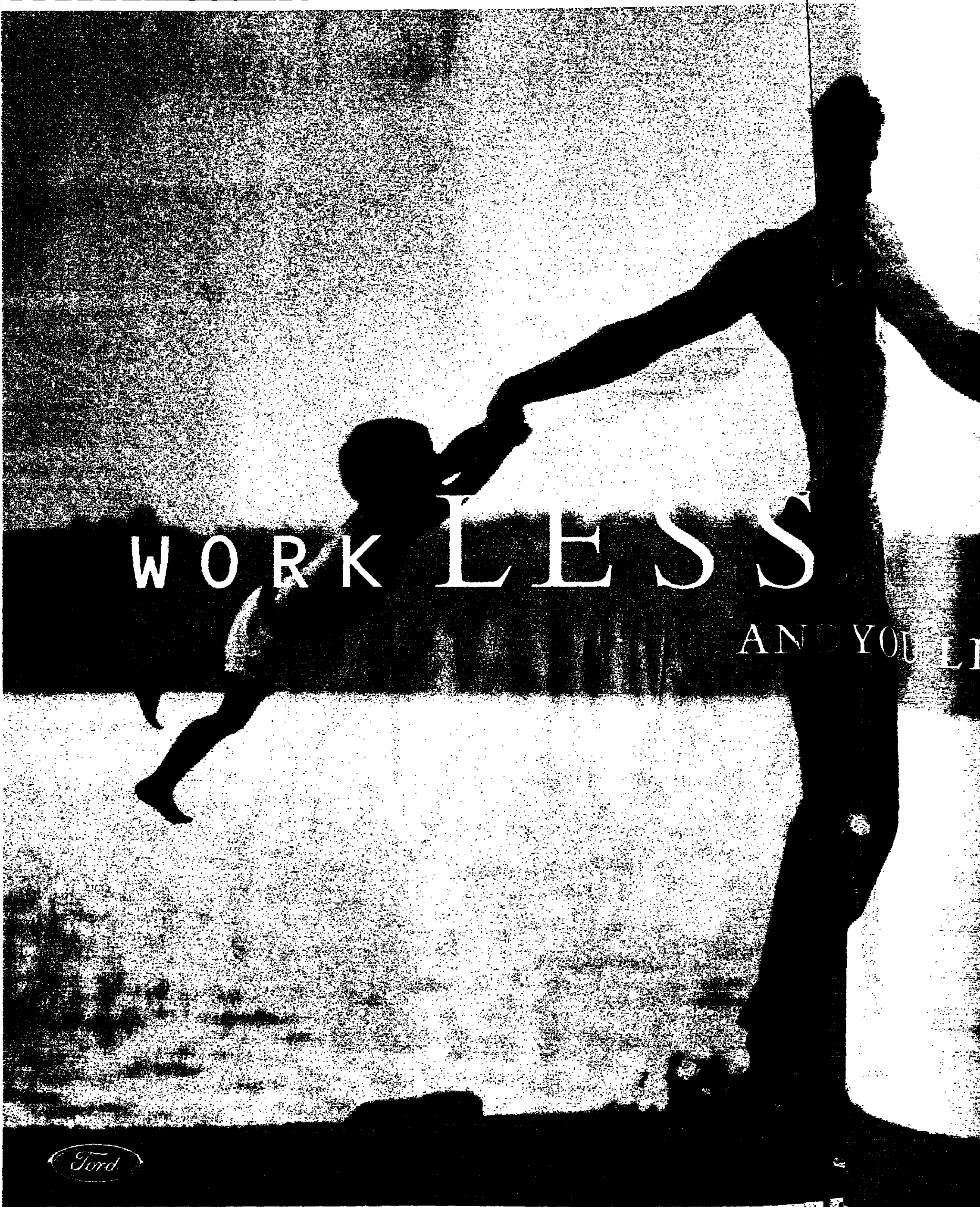
As Mr Ross prepared to leave, King Hussein of Jordan was due to make his first visit to Gaza since 1967, with Abdul-Karim Kabariti, his Prime Minister, to show solidarity with Mr Arafat.

Earlier, Mr Arafat's cabinet said: "If the international community does not move immediately to save the peace process ... the whole region will witness explosions."

'The main sticking-point is not something easy ... It is the further redeployments'

to give up the West Bank. Arguing with a policeman, Salah al-Taamari, a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, pointed to the rocks and said: "He says if we move them he will bulldoze the whole road. This shows the government's racism, its inability to look at the Palestinians as ... partners in peace."

As the mood on the ground becomes more bitter, there is a growing sense of crisis among leaders seeking a diplomatic breakthrough. Yesterday Dennis Ross, the US envoy, said he was returning to Washington after failing to broker an agreement on an Israeli withdrawal



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Must the judges undo all the President's modesty?

Rupert Cornwell
Washington

It all stems from what might have happened between two people over a few minutes in an Arkansas hotel room on 8 May 1991. But today the sexual harassment charges brought by Paula Corbin Jones against Bill Clinton come before the Supreme Court. The court's ruling this summer will certainly create constitutional history – and quite possibly huge new

trouble for the President. A week before his inauguration for a second, ghosts of scandals old and new are gathering around the White House. Congress is planning for hearings into the controversy over dubious Democratic campaign fund-raising, while his one-time political strategist Dick Morris, who resigned over a liaison with a prostitute, has just published some self-serving memoirs with a host of titillating detail about his work for Mr Clinton. In



Cracked image: America has long since made its mind up about the private life of Bill Clinton (pictured left with wife Hillary). But Paula Jones (right) still poses a threat

terms of potential humiliation, however, neither comes close to the Paula Jones affair. "I only have control over what I do," Mr Clinton said on Friday, when asked to comment

on the involvement of the Supreme Court, which will not pronounce on the substance of the case, but whether a sitting President should be obliged to stand trial in a civil case. His

words strain credulity, however, if Ms Jones's account of what happened five years ago is to be believed.

On that 8 May, she was a low-level state employee, a \$6-an-

hour receptionist at a business conference at the Excelsior Hotel in Little Rock, when, she says, she was asked to meet then Governor Clinton in a private room. There, Ms Jones

claims, Mr Clinton caressed her hair before exposing himself and asking for oral sex. She says she refused and left.

In 1994 she told her story in public, to be greeted initially by derision. But after the final breakdown of efforts to reach an out-of-court settlement, she brought a \$700,000 (£450,000) sexual harassment suit to clear her name. Mr Clinton's lawyers say his duties as President mean he should be granted temporary immunity. But today, in a case without precedent, Ms Jones's lawyers will argue that no man is above the normal workings of the law.

In purely political terms, the controversy is less damaging than Whitewater and the other "scandals" beating around the President. He faces no further election, he cannot be impeached for it, and most Americans have long since made up their minds, for better or worse, about Mr Clinton's private life. The embarrassment of it, however, could hardly be surpassed.

To make matters worse, the media mood is turning in Ms Jones's favour. Once the establishment press treated her tale as the fabrication of a floozie out to make some fast money.

But last autumn the respect-

ed *American Lawyer* magazine weighed in with an influential article arguing that Ms Jones had a decent case, not least because she had told six people what allegedly happened within two days of the incident, one – her colleague receptionist – 10 minutes after leaving the hotel room. Last week her case made the cover of *Newsweek* under the headline "Should she be heard?" To which *Newsweek's* answer was: yes, and its advice to the President equally trenchant: Settle out of court, fast.

One powerful reason is money. Already the President has run up an estimated \$1.5m in legal fees, and the meter of his \$475-an-hour lawyer Robert Bennett will tick even faster if the Justices allow the case to proceed. The betting is they will. Although they may well rule the case should not actually go to court before Mr Clinton leaves office in 2001, they are likely to permit the "discovery" phase, in which evidence is gathered, to begin at once. This will see Mr Clinton submitting to detailed questioning about his extra-marital sexual habits as Governor – and conceivably to a degrading physical examination to test Ms Jones's claim that she can identify "distinguishing characteristics" in the President's genital area.

The White House smells a conspiracy

Rupert Cornwell

Is the Paula Jones case an isolated assault on the President's good name? Not a bit of it, says the White House.

Her sexual harassment charges and the publicity accorded them are fruit of a deliberate conspiracy, stretching from right-wing ideologues to the British tabloids, to defame Bill Clinton and if possible hound him from office.

With a paranoia reminiscent of the least glorious moments of the Nixon administration, the White House last week made public a 331-page report from its counsel's office entitled, "Communication Stream of Conspiracy Commerce".

The report contains hundreds of press articles, but its prize exhibit is an alleged media chain, purporting to show how allegations of White House

skulduggery and scandal find their way from obscure think-tanks to the mainstream media.

The Jones affair, which arose from the 1993 "Troopergate" revelations from members of then-Governor Clinton's security detail about his sexual adventuring in Arkansas, is but one example. Others include some of the more lurid White-house subplots.

Mr Clinton's advisers' conspiracy begins with "well-funded right-wing think-tanks and individuals". These feed their fantasies via specialist journals and the Internet, through British tabloids and conservative United States papers to heavyweights such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.

The study has earned the White House nothing but derision – not least because the US media is far too disorganised to conduct a conspiracy.

significant shorts

Yeltsin at work on his recovery

President Boris Yeltsin, recovering from pneumonia, had become more active and was working on documents, his doctors said. A bulletin released through the Kremlin said he was in a stable condition, with normal blood pressure, pulse and temperature. *Reuter - Moscow*

Gandhi's ashes set for the final journey

Forty-nine years after he was killed by a Hindu fanatic and cremated in Delhi, Mahatma Gandhi's ashes will be immersed in the Ganges this month. The ashes, placed by aides in a State Bank of India locker, will be handed to a relative today after a recent Supreme Court order. *Reuter - New Delhi*

Algerian army urged to rebel

Algeria's banned Islamic Salvation Front urged the army to mutiny, on the fifth anniversary of the cancellation by the military of elections that the fundamentalists appeared poised to win. *Reuter - Paris*

Burundi says refugees shot

Burundian soldiers shot dead 126 Burundian Hutu refugees trying to break out of a holding camp, the army admitted. Seven soldiers had been arrested. The refugees had been expelled from Tanzania. *AP - Bujumbura*

Baghdad tells of aide's death

Abdullah Fadhi al-Samarai, an adviser to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, had died in a "regrettable incident", Baghdad radio announced. *Reuter - Baghdad*

Dutch make big ecstasy haul

Police searching a ship from China found a haul of chemicals capable of producing 30 million ecstasy pills, the biggest such discovery in the country. *Reuter - Rotterdam*



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Saving the world needs leadership, not arson

Middle-class greens were brought face-to-face with the spectre of violence over the weekend, when a tipper truck was set ablaze by protesters in Newbury. Some of them (us?) will have felt a strong urge to hop into their Range Rovers and head back to respectability. But even without the actions of the Provisional wing of the ecology movement, the hardening of positions in the muddy trenches of the battles of the Newbury bypass and the Exeter-Honiton road raise important questions about the future direction of environmental protest.

We need to step back and review the position of the green movement in its broadest sense. There is a sense of millennialist unease about the environment and the sustainability of the modern capitalist way of life which lies beneath public opinion in this country. Opinion polls show that people think the environment is important, but beyond that they have relatively little idea what should be done to save the planet. In their environmental policies, the main political parties are surprisingly close to each other, with the Liberal Democrats the most green and Labour – even more surprisingly – the least. Meanwhile, the Green Party, which in 1989 seemed set to replace the "Social and Liberal Democrats" as the third force in British politics, has disappeared into its own leaderless ghetto. It seemed determined to copy the German Greens' split between

realos and fundis before it had anything to get real about. Meanwhile, journalists have been eager to hail the direct-action campaigns against roads and animal-rights protests against veal exports as evidence of a broad movement uniting the marginalised and the mainstream of middle England.

There is a danger that these campaigns are a bit like the old labour movement in what turned out not to be its heyday. Some of the green protesters seem to be getting into a losing mentality, glorying in heroic individual sacrifice and acclaiming defeats as dry runs for eventual inevitable victory.

It should have been deeply worrying to greens to see Tony Benn turn up at Newbury, "speaking under an old oak tree" (of course), and describing the campaign against the bypass as "brilliant". We all know what the old stager regards as "brilliant". Labour fought a "brilliant" campaign in 1983. The miners' leader, Arthur Scargill, fought a "brilliant" campaign in 1984-85.

Television pictures of arson and demonstrators smashing up earth-moving machines are the best way of putting off your potential supporters. But the spokespeople of the green movement already know this. Charles Secrett of Friends of the Earth had it exactly right: "The criminal actions of a few hotheads run the risk of turning public opinion against the campaign. Scenes like these will discourage the

millions in middle England who believe in environmental protection."

However, the fundamental problem is not that a few people have run amok in Newbury, but that the green movement lacks leadership. Almost all anti-roads protesters, from Mr Secrett through to "Swampy", the 23-year-old buried 50 feet underground near Exeter who featured in our pages recently, know the sacred importance of preserving their claim to non-violence. They believe, in Mr Benn's ominous words on Saturday, that their protests have "raised issues of immense importance for everyone in Britain". They may

have helped draw attention to the problems of the car culture, but we suspect that phase is over. A vibrant, successful green movement needs to be more flexible and imaginative, thinking of new ways of raising awareness without alienating the middle classes. Perhaps the campaign of civil disobedience against the Milosevic government in Serbia offers a model?

The public's Green consciousness is unformed, full of confusions about the relative importance of different environmental issues. This is not helped by what appears to many people as tree-hugging mysticism, obscuring the link

between road-building and climate change, for example.

This disconnectedness of green politics is partly a function of the success of "single-issue" pressure groups. Greenpeace mobilised public opinion on the backs of whales. The International Fund for Animal Welfare on pictures of big-eyed fluffy seals. Prince Charles and Jonathan Dimbleby on the basis of nature trails for grown-ups. This last, the green wellie lobby, is perhaps the most important part of the whole movement, and its small "c" conservative members are among those most likely to be alienated not just by violence but by any publicity for the "dogs on strings" faction.

It is because many environmental dilemmas pose large questions to which the answers are uncertain that some doubt that there is a single green cause. Does the energy used in recycling do more damage than the depletion of finite resources in making new things? Is there any point in saving energy while the world's population grows so fast? But the truth is that these questions are linked. What is lacking is a strong lead for the general public on priorities. So far, our politicians have only shown what Margaret Thatcher called followership.

We need leadership founded on scientific method rather than sentimentality about animals or the countryside, although it can start from such things. Priorities need to be set, and a free market is one of the best ways of reconcil-

ing competing concerns, but too many green fundis confuse capitalism with markets and are suspicious of attempts to put a price on environmental damage.

While we respect individual acts of non-violent heroism, and while we agree with Swampy and Friends of the Earth that there can be nothing more important than the sustainability of human life – and therefore all life – on this planet, all greens need to reconsider what it means to lead public opinion.

Name the data, Gordon

Don't tell anybody, but we're worried about Gordon. If he dithers this much about choosing a wife, what's he going to be like when the monthly money supply figures come through at Number 11? Despite reports of a summer engagement, Mr Brown's minders insisted yesterday that he had "no plans" to marry Sarah Macaulay, the beautiful fixer of leftist public relations. Is that like having "no plans" to raise personal taxes, or a different category of denial altogether? Of course, his personal life has nothing to do with what kind of Chancellor he would be. It is purely coincidence that it is high time both we and Ms Macaulay got some straight answers.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tories too can benefit from voting reform

Sir: While it is obvious, as more voters resort to tactical voting, why the Prime Minister should feel hostile towards any Lib-Lab alignment, it is less understandable why he should lay such emphasis on his dislike of any electoral reform ("Lib-Lab talks to test electoral reform", 6 January).

For there are scores of constituencies in which Liberal Democrat candidates are traditionally in third place. Realising next spring that their man cannot win, are Liberal Democrats more likely to give their support to Labour, which has promised a referendum on electoral reform, or to Conservatives whose leadership has expressed unequivocal opposition?

In 1951, after a hard-won Tory victory, Winston Churchill declared: "We must not be blind to the anomaly which has brought to this House 186 representatives who are returned only by a minority of those who voted in their constituencies. Nor can we, to whatever party we belong, overlook the constitutional injustice done to 2,600,000 voters (Liberals) who, voting upon a strong tradition, have been able to return only nine Members of Parliament.... I do not think this is a matter which we can brush aside."

Sir FREDERICK BENNETT
Aberangell, Gwynedd

Sir: Vernon Bogdanor ("Let's root out the rot in our sickly constitution", 8 January) rightly emphasises the Government's low percentage support among the voters, but fails to point out that the real democratic deficit is far worse than, say, a 42.58 per cent split.

In the 14 general elections since the Second World War no governing party has commanded a simple majority of those who voted – although four have achieved 48-49 per cent. At the same time, however, an average of 23 per cent of the registered electorate has failed to vote in numbers ranging from a "low" 5.4 million (16 per cent) in 1950 to an appalling 11 million (28 per cent) in 1970.

This takes no account of those (currently approaching 2 million) who for various reasons are not even registered to vote.

I calculate that in 1992 the Conservatives were elected on the positive choice of only about 33 per cent of the potential adult electorate.

Constitutional reform, including proportional representation, will not necessarily ensure that people will turn out to vote. What is urgently needed is improvements to the electoral machinery to make it more efficient, up-to-date and "voter friendly".

RAYMOND BURGESS
Birmingham

Sir: Your leading article of 9 January states: "Direct democracy unmediated by hearings of evidence, proper arguments, detailed information and constitutional safeguards can become a kind of tyranny itself." It seems that you are in favour not of real democracy, where everyone is entitled to an equal say in public affairs, but government by experts who know what is best for us.

The majority in Britain would bring back hanging tomorrow, however, if the ordinary person in the street were given direct-democracy powers he would rise to the responsibility. Don't give up on



ordinary people: they know how to live and what sort of society they want to live in. They don't need politicians to guide them.

MURRAY PATON
Bourne End
Buckinghamshire

Sir: I sympathise with G O Jones's concern to exercise his democratic rights yet escape election-time razzmatazz (letter, 10 January). He could follow my example. I have registered my proxy vote and will now depart to Africa for a two-year posting. Drastic? Maybe.

ROBERT JOHN
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire

Stone of Scone is Northern Irish

Sir: Now that the Stone of Scone has been returned to Scotland ("Scots get the Stone, but Major wants the jam", 10 January), I wonder when it will be returned to Northern Ireland? I quote from *The Presbyterian of Route* by the Rev Harry C Waddell (published 1960):

"Towards the end of the fifth century Fergus McEic became owner of the district around Armoyn. He granted lands to St Patrick in the year 474 and built the first Christian church in the region. Fergus crossed to the Scottish side, occupied Dunstaffnage Castle, and brought with him the celebrated *Lia Faid*, or Stone of Fate, on which Irish monarchs were crowned and which was afterwards removed to Scone."

Perhaps a campaign to return the stone to Ireland could unite the people in a way that Messrs Adams, Trimble and Robinson never can.

SUZANNE STOCKMAN
Felixstowe, Suffolk

Wind turbines a threat to climate

Sir: It seems to me that wind turbine generators cannot be as harmless as people assume (letters, 9 January). Wind carries energy, hence the use of wind farms to generate electricity. The turbines remove this energy from the wind and take it elsewhere.

Global weather is a chaotic system. The essence of chaos theory is that small changes in one part of the system lead to drastic and unpredictable changes in other parts of the system.

I believe that the removal of energy from the wind could cause large-scale changes to wind systems in other parts of the world. Thus wind farms could conceivably cause just as much climatic damage as the fossil-fuel-burning power stations they are supposed to be replacing.

ANDREW COSGRAVE
Corsham, Wiltshire

Sir: Professor John Twidell (letters, 9 Jan.) is in danger of being run away with by his clean-energy hobby-horse. In writing about the new turbine at Nympsfield, I nowhere expressed disapproval of wind-power as such: I am as worried as anyone about the damaging chemical emissions of fossil fuel, and I welcome clean power, however generated.

My point was simply that a prominent spot in an area of outstanding natural beauty is not the place for a single turbine 200 ft tall. As I wrote, the DTI inspector

agreed that the structure would be severely detrimental to the village, and contrary to all existing conservation policies. My aim, further, was to show how ordinary people are powerless to protect their own environment.

Finally, may I inform the Professor that I do not live in Nympsfield, and, in describing the villagers' rear-guard action, was not trying to protect my own back yard. DUFF HART-DAVIS
Uxbridge, Gloucestershire

Sir: Tom Stevenson's article ("Costain chaos as fists fly", 7 January), when linked with the accompanying photograph, may have given the impression that Friends of the Earth fought with security guards at Costain's latest extraordinary general meeting. We did not.

Our shareholder campaign against the ill-fated Newbury bypass has always been conducted peacefully. Violence is not only morally repugnant but counter-productive to effective campaigning. We condemn those who think otherwise, including the few hotheads who aggressively confronted the Costain directors.

Let us not forget, though, that the by-pass builders are committing a far greater wrong by ruining four of Britain's best wildlife reserves, 12 archaeological sites and one listed Civil War battlefield site for a road that will not relieve Newbury's severe congestion.

CHARLES SECRETT
Director, Friends of the Earth
London NI

Women support expelled priest

Sir: I was interested to see the piece about Tissa Balasuriya's excommunication ("How Rome dealt with a turbulent priest", 7 January).

I was with Fr Balasuriya in December at the fourth general assembly of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) in the Philippines. Fr Balasuriya was a founder member of EATWOT and it was with some shock that 93 participants from 33 countries, mainly in the Third World, heard of his possible excommunication.

It was clear that one of the main reasons was his refusal to sign a profession of faith which included the words: "I firmly accept and hold that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women."

The women members issued a statement that "as women theologians from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the minorities from the US, we deeply appreciate this strong gesture of solidarity with women coming from a male theologian".

The whole conference was later invited to sign a resolution affirming support for Fr Balasuriya and appealing to his superiors and the Pope to give him a fair hearing and stop all proceedings excommunicating him.

Many, like me, involved in the struggle to ordain women in the Church of England have studied Fr

Balasuriya's writings and valued his thinking. As a Welsh woman celebrating with my sisters in Wales their ordination to the priesthood this weekend, I find it ironic that while one part of the Church is being more inclusive, another is finding it necessary to censure so harshly an inspiring theologian and priest with a long history of struggling for justice and peace.

BRIDGET REES
Theology Adviser to Christian Aid
Malvern, Worcestershire

Scientology ban helps democracy

Sir: To compare Germany's stance on Scientology with the Nazi persecution of Jews, as several Hollywood stars did, does no justice to modern Germany (reports, 10 and 11 January).

The reason for the opposition to Scientology is the same reason that Communists cannot become civil servants, and why there is now discussion on whether civil servants who are Freemasons should have to declare their affiliation.

The purpose is to prevent nepotism and the undermining of a working democracy by secretive, possibly undemocratic organisations.

When the Nazis seized power, it was facilitated by the existence of a democracy which permitted its very opponents to form groups and even become members of parliament.

Germany's post-war constitution has recognised this fault and established a "strong" democracy, one that can indeed be intolerant when its very root, the open democratic process, is endangered.

TOBIAS SCHUMACHER
London W14

Bavarian throne first for Franz

Sir: While Duke Franz of Bavaria is indeed the senior representative of the Stuart line ("King Franz of Scotland?", 11 January), before he concerns himself with the Scottish throne he will surely wish to see the restoration of his native Bavaria's.

In 1992 a Bavarian radio phone-in poll resulted in 68 per cent voting for the country to be a kingdom once more. This is exactly twice the number who, in the recent television debate, voted in favour of a British republic. I trust that all those who believe the British republican minority should be given the right to have a president will be equally vociferous in supporting the Bavarian majority's desire to have a king.

DONALD FOREMAN
Secretary-General
The Monarchist League
London WC1

Sir: James Cusick is mistaken. Mary, wife of William III, was not the sister of James II but his daughter.

LIAM DUNNE
London SW18

McCarthy cash went to charity

Sir: Jo Brand questioned whether John McCarthy "cheepened his experiences for the sake of some cash" when he did an advert for One-to-One cellular phones ("Jo Brand's Week", 4 January).

As someone who was active herself in the campaign against the Asylum Act, she will be interested to know that he is a dedicated patron of the Medical Foundation, a charity that helps survivors of torture. The majority are asylum-seekers.

He donated the entire proceeds (£80,000) to the foundation to help clients hit by the withdrawal of benefits.

HALLEY COHEN
Medical Foundation for the Care of
Victims of Torture
London NW5

Business aid for safer streets

Sir: Jason Bennetto ("The big issue? Safer streets", 8 January) concludes his analysis of "zero tolerance", by suggesting, somewhat dispiritedly, that "it may be a luxury we cannot afford" given the extra costs of cracking down on low-level street offences.

This omits one factor which was employed in New York with some success. There, "business improvement districts" have developed, a small rate being levied on all privately owned commercial properties in a given area (usually one that is visibly *délinquante*). The levy is spent on extra street cleaning staff, graffiti removal and street security. Why not Kin's Cross in London?

RICHARD DE ZOVS
Faculty of Health and Social Science
South Bank University
London SE16

Sir: When I am in London I frequently encounter MPs, most of whom are Scottish and many of whom are aggressive and drink too much ("Hey Jimmy: heard about the minister who thinks most beggars are Scots?", 11 January). I have never met one yet who politely asked me for my vote.

Dr DAVID DELVIN
The Medical Information Service
Little Shelford, Cambridgeshire

analysis

Britain serves up a winner

The success of Tim Henman threatens to confound the national stereotype of heroic failure. Matt Tench traces the rise of a rare champion

Until recently the odds on a British winning Wimbledon were, in the words of the *Lad* brokes' spokesman, "about the same as the second coming". This was hardly surprising, the bookies simply endorsing the national stereotype Britain reserves for its tennis players: foppish, lightly-tanned young men, who pulled out the odd nice shot or two before losing gracefully to an unknown Swede in the tournament's early rounds. Their fame was brief and brittle. Like their sport they rarely got any coverage outside Wimbledon fortnight.

Which is one of many reasons why Tim Henman is not your average British tennis player. The last 12 months have seen the 22-year-old from Oxford break through in his sport and, typically, he has been as impressive in the winter months as he was in June and July. At the beginning of December he reached the semi-final of the Grand Slam Cup, the ludicrously lucrative end-of-season bash in Munich. If that was progress, his start to 1997 has been little short of phenomenal. A week ago he made it to his first significant final, a feat he bettered at the weekend by winning the Sydney International, his first major title.

In these tournaments he was beating players we have all heard of: Michael Stich, Goran Ivanisevic and Sergei Bruguera, for example. The Australian Open, the first Grand Slam of the year, starts today in Melbourne, and for the first time in living memory a Briton goes into such a prestigious event with a chance of winning it, albeit a slim one. Whatever happens, Henman has done enough already to show he is the best British tennis player for a generation, and maybe much more.

His rise could not be better timed, coming as it does at a time when two of middle England's favourite sports have given their followers little apart from depression and humiliation. England's cricketers have been in decline for a decade



now, but even by their own standards the recent routing in the one-day series by Zimbabwe marks something of a nadir. England's rugby union team does still win matches – though not against the world's better teams – but here the frustration focuses on the game's antediluvian rulers who have completely botched the move to professionalism.

But if Henman's rise has been fortuitous, it was certainly not predictable. For generations the juxtaposition of Wimbledon – the most successful and most important tennis tournament in the world – and the lamentable inadequacy of British tennis players was one of the fixed paradoxes of the sporting landscape. Year after year the All England Club would announce record profits, year after year more was put into the development of the game in this country, year after year, British interest at Wimbledon would end by the first Thursday. So where has our new hero come from?

For most of his tennis life Tim Henman has been barely distinguishable from many of his contemporaries: gifted, but certainly not a prodigy. His bloodline, it is true, could hardly be bettered. Ellen Stowell-Brown, his great-grandmother, was the first woman to serve overarm at Wimbledon; his grandmother, Susan, with a nice sense of symmetry, the last woman to serve underarm. Her husband, Henry Billington,

made 15 appearances at the championships, reaching the third round on several occasions. Three of their children, including Tim's mother Jane, competed in junior Wimbledon. His father, Tony, is no slouch either, playing tennis, squash, hockey and cricket for Oxfordshire as well as pursuing a successful career as a solicitor.

Tim, the youngest of three brothers, first picked up a racket at the age of three, and it was immediately clear that he had a gift for the game – and he soon developed a somewhat precocious ambition. Asked recently when he first realised he would pursue a career in tennis, Henman answered, without a trace of irony, "from the age of five or six". Certainly those who met Henman, even in his earliest years, were struck by the determination and focus of a schoolboy who was, in the words of David Lloyd, "nicely selfish".

Lloyd, a member of Britain's most famous tennis family and the founder of a lucrative string of indoor tennis centres, came across Henman as the beneficiary of one of his scholarships. Still there was no sign that the teenage Henman, who was small for his age, was anything special. That breakthrough came in 1992 when, at 17, he was invited by Bill Knight, then head of training at the Lawn Tennis Association, to join three others to be coached by David Felgate. Recalling that

time this week, Knight remembered that it was another member of the group, Nick Gould, who began as its outstanding player but that "in a comparatively short space of time Tim was number two. By 1993 he was number one".

The choice of Felgate, still in his twenties, was intriguing. A British player whose achievements had been modest, he returned from America having done some private coaching and offered his services to the LTA. Knight, though concerned about Felgate's lack of experience, was struck by his knowledge of the game and his contacts within it. Under Felgate's tutelage all four improved rapidly, but Henman's transformation was remarkable. "He obviously had more talent than other people," Knight said. "He knew and felt the game much better. And he understood what he had to do to get better. He could understand what David Felgate could give him, and more. He knew what he had to do to become a better player."

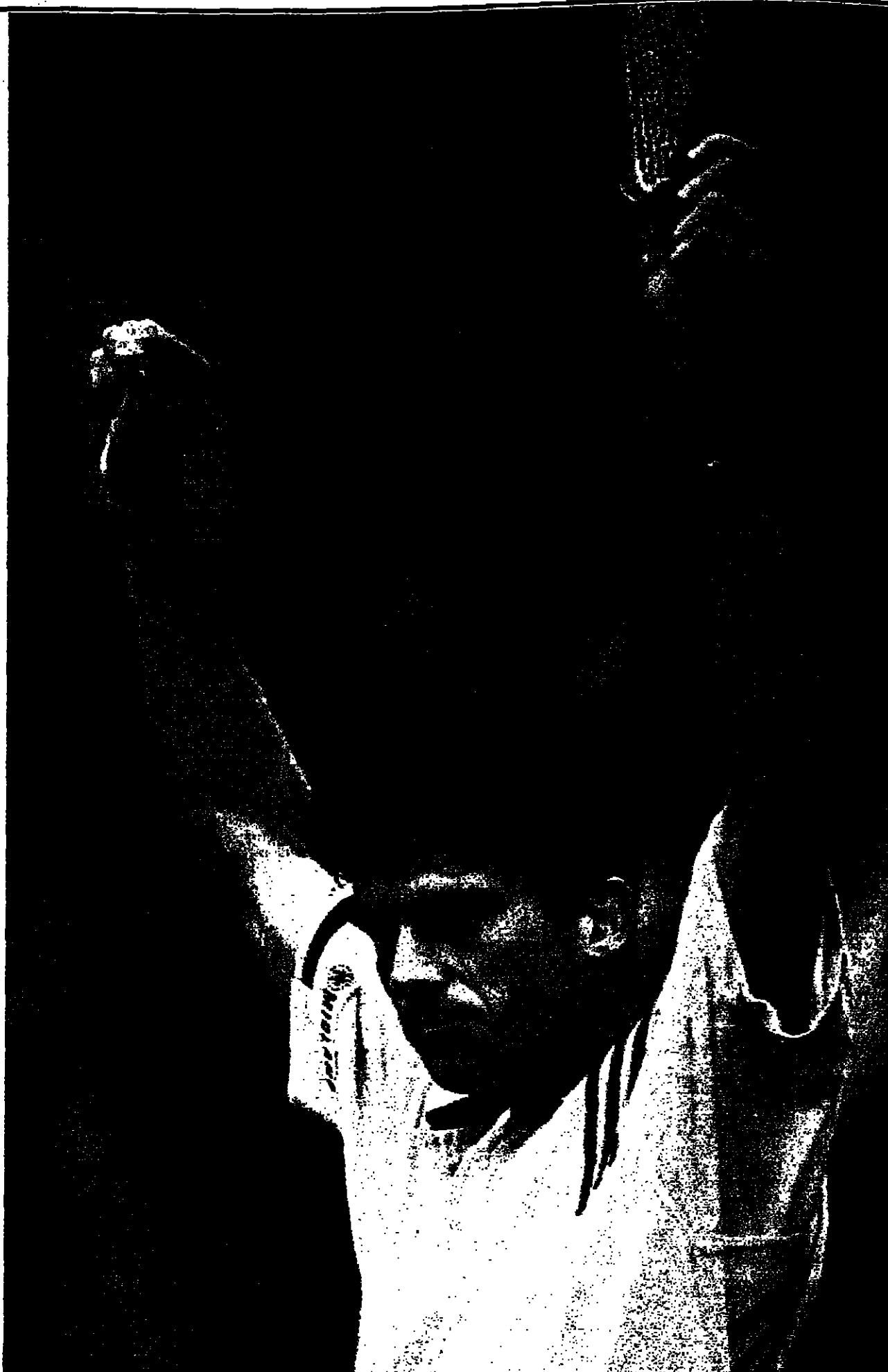
Blessed with tremendous natural talent – "great hands", in the language of the professionals – Henman, unusually, was prepared to put the hours in as well. "When things come easy to you, it's easy not to work," as Bill Knight puts it.

By now Henman and Felgate had forged a strong working and personal relationship and as Henman continued to improve, so Felgate spent more and more time with him, a progression that reached its natural conclusion recently when he became Henman's full-time coach (his wife, Jan, is Henman's agent).

Having made an impact as a junior, the next step for Henman was the satellite circuit, the one beneath the top level, the ATP tour. For some time this dog-eat-dog world, with its modest hotels and negligible public interest, is an insurmountable hurdle. James Baily, for instance, made an earlier impact than Henman when, at 17, he became the first Briton to win a junior boys' grand slam title for 28 years. Eighteen months later he was out of the game. "I'd become a monomaniac," he later recalled. "As I got older I wanted to go out more, have a drink, have girlfriends, lead a normal life. I was brain dead most of the time."

Baily found the satellite world unbearable. "Everyone was so much friendlier at junior level. The satellites are just torture. No one talks to you, and you don't talk to anybody. No one really wants to be there. It could be very lonely."

Buttressed perhaps by his inherent love of the game, Henman, with Felgate at his side,



From natural talent (above left, aged eight) to a hero in the making at Wimbledon

Photograph: David Ashdown

sailed through. He was just beginning to make an impact on the tour itself when his professional career hit its first – and to date only – crisis. It was an incident that certainly established him as not your average British tennis player: he was disqualified from Wimbledon.

This unique disgrace – one that had even eluded John McEnroe – came during a doubles match in the 1995 championships. Henman, playing with Jeremy Bates on Court 14, missed the ball after it hit the net cord. As a ball-girl moved in, Henman lashed out at another ball, one he was holding, hitting the girl, who was only a foot away, full on the ear. Henman was immediately thrown out for "unsportsmanlike conduct", and was close to tears at a hastily arranged press conference. "It was a complete accident, but I'm responsible for my actions," he said.

It may have been as well that the incident occurred while Henman was relatively

unknown. Twelve months later he took the championships by storm, and his life would never be the same again.

The catalyst was a first-round five-set victory over Yevgeny Kafelnikov, a newly-crowned French Open champion. Henman raced into a two-set lead, but allowed his Russian opponent to win the next two and go a break up in the final one. It seemed a familiar tale of brave British failure, but to the delight of the Centre Court crowd Henman responded with two further breaks to win the match. He went on to become the first Briton to reach the quarter-finals since 1973, but it was his fighting spirit that left an indelible mark.

"I remember thinking that I'd watched a number of British tennis players making names for themselves at Wimbledon by playing really well, but the sad fact was that they lost in those matches," Henman told *The Independent* in an interview last

month. "I decided I didn't want to be put in the same bracket." Henman's coolness under pressure is probably his greatest asset, a fitting one for someone whose all-time hero is Bjorn Borg. He wins more than his fair share of tie-breaks and makes a habit of fighting back after losing the first set. At the same time he possesses a range of shot that impressed McEnroe among others, at the US Open two months after Wimbledon.

Where will it all end? There are already signs of Henmania, with a teenage female following and a degree of interest in his exploits that would have seemed absurd only a year ago. A placard for his match in the Davis Cup on No 1 court last September simply said, "Timbledon".

The man himself appears unfazed. A popular and relaxed member of the tour, he has recently moved to London and greets his fame with a mixture of amusement and bemusement. "In Moscow, while I was playing out there, Tina Turner was in concert," he recalled recently.

"Her manager happens to be English, and he sent a message asking if I would like to come and see the concert and meet her afterwards. Imagine that? I would have gone up to her in complete awe, and she would probably have turned round and said, 'Who the fuck are you?'"

Wimbledon this year would appear made for him. Having, at the end of last year, identified strength and stamina as areas that need to be addressed, there are already signs of progress, while Boris Becker's advice to follow his service in more has also borne fruit. Many experts think grass will prove his best surface.

Certainly with no major football tournament this summer, and England's cricketers all but certain to be losing disastrously to the Australians, the nation will be crying out for a hero by June. To expect a victory would be unfair, but he could easily surpass last year's exploits. One thing's for sure. If Tim Henman does win Wimbledon, even Tina Turner will know who he is.

Will you help save Jenny's life tonight?



Jenny sleeps in a shop doorway – but not to queue for the sales. She's there because she's homeless. All she wants this winter is to survive – but without help, she may not.

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£25 is a small price to pay to save a human life. But it could be the most important saving you'll ever make.

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Chapter One
Your name is Jeremy Plinth, and you are the young, up-and-coming Junior Minister for Arms Deals at the Foreign Office. You live at a small house in Chelsea with your wife and two children and you also live some of the time with your mistress in Fulham, but that is another story.

As an up-and-coming Tory politician, you have mixed feelings about the coming election. On the one hand, you want the Tory party to win, because they are your team. On the other hand, you will probably rise faster in opposition, because if the

Tories lose the election a lot of the senior ones will get out of politics, leaving more space for your ambitions. So a Tory loss might be good for you. On the other hand...

Things like this keep going through your mind so much that you even dream politics. One night you dream that you are in Parliament when the fire alarm goes off and the place fills with smoke. You are fighting your way out when you stumble over a body. It is the unconscious Prime Minister! You know you haven't a second to lose. What do you do?

a) Pick up the recumbent Mr Major and rescue him.
b) Shrug your shoulders and say, "Well, really, everybody should be responsible for his own welfare and not expect politicians to do it for him."

c) Fight your way to the nearest phone and ring the press with the major scoop: "PM perishes in fire!"

d) Panic.
The correct answer is that you panic. Without experience of senior office, what hope have you got of reacting coolly? But as you panic, you realise that you are being



Miles Kington

shaken awake by your wife, who is saying: "The phone has been ringing for hours! Answer it!"

Ah, so that's why you were dreaming about fire alarms! You answer the phone, noticing that it's still pitch black and only 6am, and a voice says: "Sorry to disturb you, minister, but it's the *Today* programme here, and we'd love to have you on the programme for your reaction to the William Waldegrave revelations – we could send a car round to fetch you!"

You've never been on

Today before. You know an invitation means new status, new dignity. On the other hand you don't know what Waldegrave business he's talking about and you don't want to make a fool of yourself. You've got five seconds to decide. What do you say?

a) "Some mistake, I'm afraid. No minister here."

b) "I'll do it on condition you don't mention my mistress in Fulham."

c) "I'd love to do it as long as John Humphrys doesn't ask the questions."

d) "Get stuffed!"
Yes, the bed is so warm and the prospect of getting out of it so uninviting that with great courage you tell *Today* to get stuffed. And you go to sleep again. But five minutes later the phone rings again, and there is a soft Northern Irish accent at the other end, and you just KNOW in your heart of hearts that it's Dr Mawhinney, and he says:

"What's this I hear, Jeremy? Rejecting an invitation to appear on *Today*? For God's sake, man, we need every bit of publicity we can get and you're telling *Today* to get stuffed? Now listen to

me, Plinth. You get out of bed and phone the *Today* people and tell them you'll do it, because if you don't I'll have your guts for garters! If you don't play ball, I may also have to talk to your wife about a certain lady in Fulham..."

You are so shocked that the truth never occurs to you – namely, that it isn't Dr Mawhinney at all, but an Irish chap on the *Today* production team who can imitate Mawhinney very well, and has often used this impersonation to get ministers scurrying along. So how do you respond to the man you think is the dreaded doctor?

a) "Yes, sir, please, sir."

b) "Yes, sir, please, sir, sorry, sir."

c) "On my way now, sir."

d) "Fiss off, you dreadful fake doctor from Northern Ireland, you puffed up little bully boy!"

Yes, you tell the man you think is Mawhinney that you will gladly do it and at that moment the doorbell rings and it is the radio car sent by the *Today* programme!

More of this gripping saga tomorrow!

صحنه من الراحل

At last, homeless people find a place on the agenda

As far as I am concerned, the general election of 1997 has got off to a good start. A subject thought to have no voter appeal at all, homelessness, has bagged the headlines.

We have also heard the first new catch-phrase of the year – "zero tolerance". I suppose homelessness would not have interrupted the opening week of the campaign if not for the chance that Tony Blair had done an interview before Christmas with *The Big Issue*, whose subsequent publication then provoked a junior minister at the Home Office, David Maclean, into revealing his fantasy that most beggars in London are Scots.

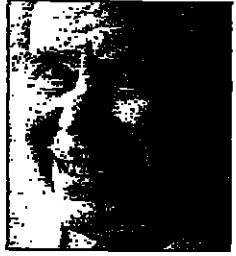
In its unpleasantness, "zero tolerance" has an authentic 1930s ring to it. It is the exact opposite of the "permissiveness" of the 1960s. The phrase was borrowed from the technical language of engineering where it is used to describe the tightness or looseness of a machine part; zero tolerance means no play in the fit of one part with another. American crime experts were the first to appropriate the phrase. They attached it to a new approach to policing which was pioneered earlier this decade in Boston and New York. No crime, however petty, such as dropping litter, would be ignored – "zero tolerance" for lawbreakers. Now this American policing method is being tested out in this country. And with it has come its label, a phrase with all the finality of a prison door being locked.

In his interview, published in last week's edition of *The Big Issue*, Mr Blair was asked whether he agreed with the experiment in zero tolerance policing being carried out in the King's Cross area of London. "Yes, I do", he answered. And in reply to a further question about whether such policing methods, where begging can become an arrestable offence, mean that society is being asked to show zero tolerance towards homeless people, Mr Blair said: "The basic principle here is to say yes it is right to be intolerant of people homeless on the streets."

So now "zero tolerance" has been transmuted from a technical description into a sort of praiseworthy "intolerance". No doubt Mr Blair meant to refer to an unfortunate state, homelessness, rather than to a set of unfortunate people, the homeless. But by using such language, the Labour Party leader is lending himself to the demonising of a particular group. We can see that Mr Blair guiltily knows this, because he prefaced the answer quoted above by saying that "obviously some people will interpret this in a way which is harsh and unpleasant".

Moreover, piously not giving money to beggars but contributing instead to charities, as is the habit of Mr Blair and many other people, is a flawed response. The giving of a small coin shows sympathy. The refusal, often blank-faced, unspoken, walking on without breaking step, displays hostility. Such negative actions cumulatively make palliative, out-reach work with the homeless more difficult.

Let us understand homelessness. Only a



Andreas Whittam-Smith

Whatever one thinks of zero tolerance and tough love, the fact remains that the big issue has finally made it to the electoral platform

small proportion of homeless people resort to begging. Indeed, much of homelessness is hidden, for it comprises people squatting, people continually moving from one friend to another and people in emergency accommodation, as well as those sleeping rough. The major reason for homelessness is family breakdown; this is what puts hundreds of thousands of young single people onto the streets.

In the vanguard are those who leave care. They are compelled to depart by the age of 18 or earlier from the foster homes and institutions which replaced their original families, whereas the average age for leaving the parental home is 22. Family breakdown often has the result that young people leave in a hurry, with neither job nor accommodation in view, trusting to luck. And if things don't work out, there is nowhere to which to return: in fully functioning families young people plan their move from dependence to partial dependence, and then finally to independence – and have a fall-back position always available.

Other causes of homelessness include absence of work, especially for poorly educated young people. Youth unemployment rates are twice as high as adult rates. Homelessness is also the result of learning disabilities and mental health problems. "Care in the community" translates into absence of care on the streets. Finally, all surveys show that the number of homeless people is increasing, that the homeless are getting younger and that more of them are single women.

What can be done? Family breakdown is an issue beyond the reach of government, despite all that is said about "the family". Preventative work and the easing of the problem in a multiplicity of small ways is being carried out by the homeless charities, whose help is wide-ranging and creative. The homeless charities are well worth supporting. What government can do is to focus on the dire equation: no home, no job, no home. You cannot get a job if you are homeless. This means looking at benefits, social housing and training.

Unfortunately, when the present Government examines benefits, it cuts them, especially for people under the age of 25. When I turn to the Labour leader's remedies for homelessness, another catchphrase of the moment, also borrowed from the United States, comes to mind – "tough love". As Mr Blair put it in an article on homelessness he wrote for the *London Evening Standard* on Thursday, he wants "hard-headed compassion that comes from a commitment to act, not simply a wish to sympathise". In effect tough love is a deal: we, society, have a duty to help you, the unfortunate, and you have a duty to help yourself. In this case, Labour says its part of the bargain will be to provide better education and skills training and to give local authorities greater scope to provide more affordable housing for rent. Which would be helpful, though hardly decisive. None the less, be grateful for small mercies. At last homelessness has got onto the political agenda.

Under the hammer or back on the rails?

by Jonathan Glancey

Harry Beck's famous and much-copied map of the London Underground has always been more than an aid to getting around the world's oldest and one of its largest and most complicated metro systems. First sketched in 1931, the Under-grammatic map is a brilliant diagrammatic pact between Londoners and visitors to London and the city itself. It describes a city that appears to be rational, logical, compact and easy to understand. It offers order out of chaos, and depicts the Underground network as the guiding intelligence or arterial system of the capital.

The map was mass-produced from January 1933; the new London Passenger Transport Board, the public corporation charged with running London's buses, trams and tube trains, came into being six months later. From then on, a miasma of competing road transport companies and the private Underground lines would become one integrated public service under the aegis of two giants of modern urban transport: Lord Ashfield and Frank Pick. A single-deck bus chugging through remotest Hertfordshire or a steam train puffing along the Brill branch of the former Metropolitan Railway were now painted in standard modern liveries and bore the legend "London Transport". London's transport network was no longer a patchwork of rival entrepreneurs but a public service with a long-term strategy and considerable modernising work to do.

London Transport came into being as a result of a political desire to create an efficient integrated public transport system. It would rationalise investment and improve services and an infrastructure that, like the mainline railways, had been depleted and exhausted during the First World War and had never quite recovered.

By common consent the new corporation did its job superbly, creating the world's finest urban transport system. Smart new diesel buses, trolley-buses and Tube trains were matched by sophisticated modern architecture and design. In an obituary of Frank Pick that appeared in the *Architectural Review* in 1942, Nikolaus Pevsner described the LPTB's late chief executive as "the ideal patron of our age", and paid homage to the "civilised urbanity and humane common sense" that had inspired London Transport in the Thirties.

Sixty years on, a passenger (or "customer") on the Northern Line is unlikely to know who Lord Ashfield and Frank Pick were and is most unlikely to feel that the shabby trains



Tory plans to privatise the Tube will bring no relief to its suffering customers. But there is another route, and it's been travelled before

and dismal journeys are the legacy of some act of enlightened public patronage. The fact that the Underground is in a mess, however, has little to do with the question of ownership and much to do with the way governments have treated it since it was nationalised in 1948 and subsequently handed over to public body to public body with little apparent concern for its future. The Underground has been a political and commercial shuttlecock, its managers never allowed to plan for the long term. Some of the new lines and works envisaged in the Thirties have yet to be commissioned. There is still no Chelsea-Hackney line, while many trains and stations are increasingly old and rickety.

There is no reason why a public company cannot – if permitted to raise money from banks and to bid for funds from central or local govern-

ment – run an efficient Underground. In fact, the efficiency of the network depends to a great extent on it being just that – a network of integrated lines. London Transport ran at its best when not just the Tube lines but the buses, too, were part of one single enterprise working together for the common good of the city they served. The best modern urban transport systems – as, for example, in Amsterdam – still work this way.

Privatising the Underground smacks more of political dogma than of common sense. Why break up a system that was brought together because private enterprise was unable to develop it along efficient modern lines? And if privatisation simply means the creation of a private transport monopoly, what would be the point?

Perhaps we will see a restoration of the Pullman trains on

the new Metropolitan Railway, with City folk tucking into kedgeree and kippers on the morning run from Amersham to Liverpool Street (these ran until October 1939). Or a trolley refreshment service might be introduced on the Central London Railway as it rumbles between Ealing Broadway and Epping. And of course there will be the voices of "senior conductors" thanking us for "choosing" to travel on the Bakerloo Railway from Elephant & Castle to Edgware Road, even though the only alternatives were a bus caught in a traffic jam, an expensive taxi or a long walk.

Although there is no good reason to privatise the Under-

ground, the private sector might well jump at the chance of owning it. Why? For the simple reason that the Underground is a major landowner with assets said to be worth £13bn. Property companies would surely race to build a superstore over Neasden Depot, or to promise a smart new station "facility" at Ruislip or Hainault paid for by a massive new residential development. These could be hugely profitable and help to fund a new generation of sponsored or branded trains on the Underground, each fitted out with video screens featuring non-stop advertising. Given the fact that private companies are likely to be subsidised by central government for running trains on the far reaches of the former Northern and Central lines, there is every incentive for private companies to take what public money they can get while making a killing from property deals.

Private enterprise may well be able to make the Underground run in one form or the other. Do not, however, expect it to be the "civilising agent" it was in its heyday. Anyway, as very few readers and travellers can remember those days, why let what can easily be dismissed as nostalgia get in the way of privatisation? After all, we have got used to other utilities and services being run by the private sector. Asking people to worry about the fact that they now travel on badly designed buses in London can be characterised as effete and a waste of energy. We want cheap, reliable transport, no matter how it appears; and we want it now.

If the Underground is to stay in public hands, what ought to be done? It is clear that it is in poor shape. The answer might be to reconstitute London Transport as a public corporation, as it was in 1933. A board of directors would agree financial and performance targets with London authorities and the Treasury, but would be free to invest as its members saw fit. It could be subsidised locally by a tax on London companies whose staff rely on it, or nationally by the Treasury on a long-term basis that would protect it from the financial see-saw of the Chancellor's annual budget.

Harry Beck's famous map defined an integrated public transport that remains a model of its kind. Rather than rush into privatisation, the next government would be wise to give a public sector London Underground the autonomy it needs to make the trains run on time. And even look good, too.

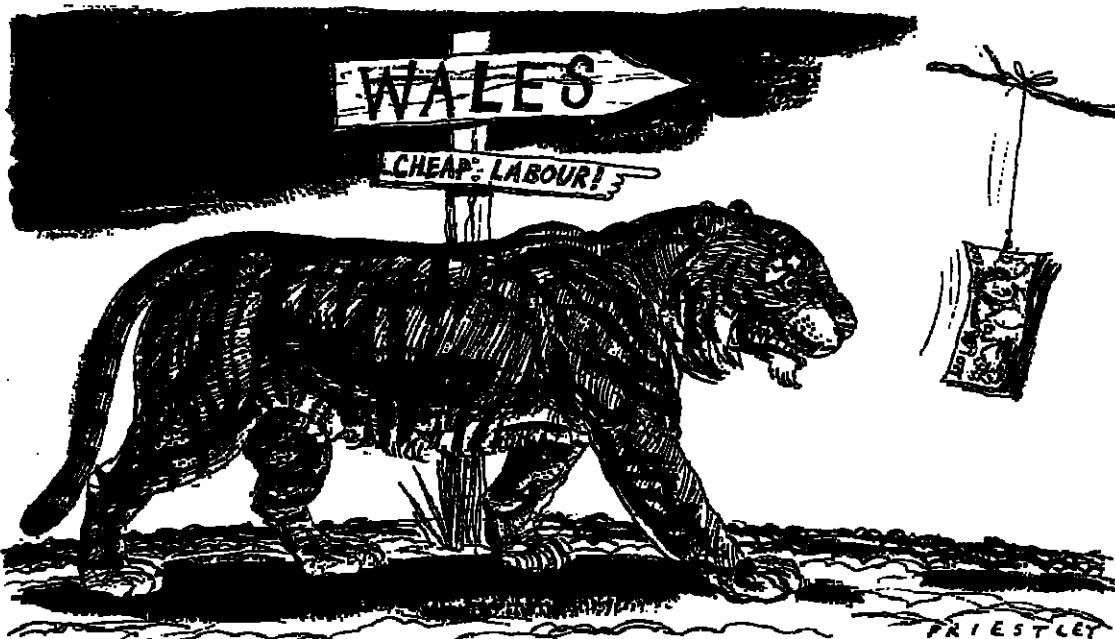
Come to low-wage Wales

Korean companies have found a grateful alternative to their own striking workers, says Tony Heath

The industrial tigers of the Pacific Rim are beginning to roar on the far distant shores of South Wales. For while workers in Korea take to the streets in protest at harsh new labour laws, the conglomerate Lucky Goldstar, one of the most voracious big cats, is setting up shop in Newport. There is a price – the somewhat undignified spectacle of the British government handing out taxpayers' money like a drunken sailor on leave after weeks at sea.

The Korean giant prefers to be known simply as LG, perhaps because the full title suggests a manufacturer of fortune cookies. It got really lucky when last year William Hague, the Welsh Secretary, underpinned the £1.7bn investment with a huge but undisclosed dollop of public money. When the project to manufacture all sorts of electronic wizardry gets going, it will employ 6,000 workers; insiders estimate that the cost to the taxpayer in government subsidies is around £30,000 a job.

The deal was met with a stony silence on the streets of Seoul. No one likes to see their jobs being exported and the tens of thousands protesting in Korea have that at the back of their minds. The new labour laws in that country were pushed through in the early hours of Boxing Day when a sleepy Britain was reaching for the post-Christmas indigestion tablets. These rules make it easy for giants like LG to "downsize" – in Korea, that is, Why are Far Eastern jobs being exported to Wales? There is widespread belief that companies such as LG find a low-wage economy attractive. Just as cheap overseas labour propped up the British Empire, so low wages in places like Wales are a lure to canny Koreans, Taiwanese and Japanese.



No one took much notice of the question of wages until 12 months ago when Ronson moved cigarette lighter production from Korea to Wales in order to save nearly 20 per cent on the wages bill. Then only a couple of hundred jobs were involved, and it may take some time before the implications of the LG invasion sink in.

The Welsh Office has a secret weapon to blunt criticism – a briefing note on pay rates. Although it fails to mention figures, the document explains, somewhat plaintively, that inward investors "are attracted to the UK and Wales because of non-wage

costs, eg employers' social security costs, pension and health contributions. These costs are lower in the UK than elsewhere in Europe. For every £100 in wages, employers pay an extra £44 in non-wage costs in Italy, £41 in France, £34 in Spain, £32 in Germany and £18 in the United Kingdom.

The note also refers to higher levels of long-term illness that prevent people from working and the country's "greater proportion of retired people". It may be heresy to suggest that if more attention were paid to non-wage costs, illness would be reduced, absenteeism slashed and the working envi-

ronment made more productive. And wouldn't it be a mark of John Major's country at ease with itself if tomorrow's pensioners could look forward to some improvement in the present levels of retirement pay?

As things stand – no Social Chapter, no minimum wage – that's just wishful thinking. The reality is stark. Wales stands 68th in the European Union's league table of regional prosperity, languishing behind regions in such countries as Italy and Finland. At £10,358 the average annual Welsh income is almost £2,000 below the European average of £12,336.



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We think it's time you went away

Hotel breaks: 2 nights for the price of 1

AVON
Bailbrook Lodge Hotel ****
35-37 London Road West
Bath, Avon, BA1 7HZ
01225 859090 £55.00
Jan-Apr Sun-Thurs
Splendid Georgian 12 bedroomed hotel close to centre, elegantly refurbished with modern facilities and car parking.

The Old Malthouse Hotel ****
Radford, Tisbury
Nr Bath, Avon, BA3 1QF
01761 470106 £66.00
Jan-Sept
A hotel of character set in beautiful surroundings with a restaurant specialising in English country cooking.

Parkside Hotel
470 Bath Road
Bridlington, Bristol, Avon, BS4 3HQ
01177 971 1461 £77.00
Jan-Sept Fri-Sun
Built in 1760 for a wealthy Bristol merchant the Parkside still boasts many original features.

BEDFORD
Shakespeare Hotel
Shakespeare Road
Bedford, MK40 2DX
01234 213147 £60.00
Jan-Sept Fri-Sun
The hotel has 19 rooms with all the facilities expected by the discerning traveller.

CHESHIRE
Eaton Hotel
29 City Road
Chester, Cheshire, CH1 3AE
01244 320840 £60.00
Jan-Jun Sun-Thurs
Canalside hotel within 5 minutes walk of city centre, tourist attractions and convenient for station.

CORNWALL
Maer Lodge Hotel ****
Crooklets Beach
Bude, Cornwall, EX23 8NG
01288 353306 £63.00
Jan-Sept
Has spacious grounds overlooking the golf course and the restaurant is renowned for its excellent cuisine.

Pennorvah Manor Hotel
Budock Water
Falmouth, Cornwall, TR11 5ED
01326 250277 £70.00
Jan-Sept
'Cornish Hidesaway' in 6 acres of gardens and woodland, serving superb food in a friendly relaxed atmosphere.

Fieldhead Hotel
Looe, Cornwall, PL13 2DR
01503 262689 £76.00
Jan-Sept
Turn of the century house set in 1.5 acres overlooking the bay with an intimate candlelit restaurant.

Mount Haven Hotel & Restaurant
Turpik Road, Marazion
Penzance, Cornwall, TR17 0DQ
01736 710249 £60.00
Jan-Apr
Warm, comfortable hotel overlooking St Michael's Mount and the sea.

Headlands Hotel
Port Gaverne
Port Isaac, Cornwall, PL29 3SH
01208 880260 From £55.00
Feb-Apr
Small hotel in a spectacular clifftop location with comfortable rooms and excellent cuisine.

CUMBRIA
The Grammar Country House Hotel
Carmel ****
Cumbria, LA11 7SG
015395 36367 £68.00
Jan-Sept
Quality hotel in own grounds in beautiful Vale of Carmel offering peace, tranquility and good food guaranteed.

The Whitewater Hotel
The Lakeland Village
Newby Bridge, Cumbria, LA12 8PX
015395 31133 £95.00
Jan-Jun
A converted old mill with a health club enjoying a riverside location at the southern end of Windermere.

Chaucer House Hotel
Derwent Water Place
Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 4DR
017687 72318 £68.00
Jan-Sept
Victorian House with all home comforts and serving good food in a relaxed atmosphere.

DERBYSHIRE
Abbeydale Hotel
Cross Street
Chesterfield, Derby, S40 4TD
01246 277849 £55.00
Jan-Sept Fri-Sun
A quiet location within strolling distance of market square and convenient for Peak District and Chatsworth.

DEVON
The Dartmoor Lodge ****
Peartree Cross
Ashburton, Devon, TQ13 7JW
01364 652232 £55.90
Jan-Apr
Just off the A38 expressway on the edge of Dartmoor National Park.

Cockhaven Manor Inn

Cockhaven Road
Bishopscote, Devon, TQ14 9RF
01626 775252 £50.00
Jan-Jun/Sept Sun-Thurs
16th Century Inn lovingly restored retaining its old world charm and character overlooking the Teign estuary.

Great Western Hotel ****
St David's Station Approach
Exeter, Devon, EX4 4NU
01392 274039 £52.00
Jan-Sept
Family owned city hotel with an excellent restaurant also superb bar food, complemented with real ales.

The Belfry Country Hotel ****
Yarcombe, Nr Honiton
Devon, EX14 9BD
01404 861234 £64.00
Jan-Sept
Small luxury hotel converted from Victorian village school with scrumptious home cooking.

Hoops Inn & Hotel ****
Horns Cross, Nr Clovelly
Bideford, Devon, EX39 5DL
01305 812372 £72.00
Jan-Jun
Romantic thatched inn near south west coastal path.

Old Church House Inn
Torreyan
Topley, Devon, TQ12 5UR
01305 812372 £75.00
Jan-Sept
Inn of immense character and old world charm in an area of outstanding natural beauty.

DORSET
Kensbrook Hotel & Restaurant
Pound Road
Lyme Regis, Dorset, DT7 3HX
01297 442596 £90.20
Jan-Sept
18th century thatched listed hotel in an acre of gardens overlooking Lyme Bay.

Millmead Country Hotel
Goose Hill
Abbotsbury, Dorset, DT3 4HE
01305 812372 £76.00
Jan-Sept
Family managed hotel in 'Hardy Country' with a small cosy restaurant serving excellent cuisine prepared by chef patron.

GLOUCESTER
Chester House Hotel
Chester House, Gloucester, GL1 5XA
01451 820286 £79.00
Jan-May Sun-Fri
Occupying a quiet but central spot in one of the Cotswold's most scenic villages.

Allards Hotel & Restaurant
High Street, Newnham on Severn
Gloucester, GL14 1AD
01594 516221 £60.00
Jan-Sept
17th century family run hotel positioned in a picturesque village at the gateway to the Forest of Dean.

Jessop House Hotel
65 Church Street
Tewkesbury, Gloucester, GL20 5RZ
01684 292017 £75.00
Jan-Sept
A Georgian Grade II listed town house situated opposite Tewkesbury's historic abbey.

HAMPSHIRE
Ashburn Hotel & Restaurant
Dartmouth Road (B 3078)
Fordingbridge, Hants, SP6 1JP
01425 552060 £79.20
Jan-Sept
Warm friendly hotel with an award winning non-smoking restaurant and has a heated outdoor pool.

KENT
Abbott's Fireside Hotel
High Street, Elham
Nr Canterbury, Kent, CT4 6TD
01303 840625 £69.00
Jan-Jun Sun-Fri
A 15th century historic house which is family run, full of old world charm and serving excellent food.

LANCASHIRE
Whoo! Lonsdale
Kirkby Lonsdale
Carnforth, Lancs, LA6 2HP
015242 71284 £68.00
Jan-Sept
Situated between the lakes and dales and serving superb food with game and fish as specialities.

LINCOLNSHIRE
The Haven Inn
Ferry Road
Barrow Haven, Lines, DN19 7EX
01469 530347 £49.50
Jan-Sept
A rural inn with beamed bars, real ales and a warm welcome.

Knighthead Hotel
9 Trafalgar Avenue
Skegness, Lines, PE25 3EU
01754 764354 £49.00
Jan-Jul/Sept Mon-Thurs



Pictured today is The Ashcroft Hotel in York. This former Victorian Mansion, with imaginatively decorated ensuite bedrooms, restaurant and bar is set in 2 acres of grounds with river views. A double or twin room for one night costs £80.

The Independent and the Independent on Sunday would like to invite you to take a hotel break and enjoy two nights for the price of one. Simply pay for one night's bed and breakfast and you will get the next night, including breakfast, free. Prices are based on two people sharing a double or twin room. All the participating hotels are members of the Minotel consortium and many will allow you to enjoy a longer stay on the same basis; pay for two nights and stay for four, for example. You can check this with your chosen hotel when you make your initial

reservation. There are more than 80 Minotel hotels participating in this offer, all of which are located in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. All the hotels offer top-class comfort and pride themselves on providing a personal service that many larger establishments cannot match. A list of the participating Minotel hotels is printed today, the list will be published again in tomorrow's Independent. You will find a brief description of each hotel including the address and availability dates. Prices are based on two people sharing a double or twin room.

THE INDEPENDENT

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

All rooms are en suite with fridges and movie channels. There is an indoor pool and the beach is nearby.

Garden House Hotel St Martins
Stamford, Lines, PE9 2LD
01780 763359 £75.00
Oct-Apr
18th century 3 star family run hotel set in an acre of gardens with many personal touches and service assured.

Washingborough Hall Country House Hotel
Church Hill
Washingborough, Lines, LN4 1BE
01522 760340 £77.00
Jan-Sept
Quietly situated in 3 acres of lawn and woodland with an outdoor heated swimming pool.

MIDDLESEX
Stanwell Hall Hotel
171 Town Lane, Stanwell
Staines, Middle, TW19 7PW
01784 251292 £95.00
Jan-Aug Fri-Sun
A Victorian country house hotel set in its own gardens.

NORFOLK
The Lifeboat Inn
Ship Lane, Thorham
King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE36 6LT
01485 512236 £65.00
Jan-Mar Sun-Thurs
16th century smugglers haunt with views across Thorham harbour to the sea.

NORTHUMBERLAND
Bridgwater House Hotel ****
Bridgwater, Warkworth
Northumberland, NE65 0XB
01665 711276 £75.00
Jan-Apr
This warm, friendly hotel set at the heart of the village has a highly recommended restaurant. Dogs are welcome.

OXFORD
Westwood Country Hotel
Hinkley Hill Top
Oxford, OX1 5BG
01865 735408 £80.00

Jan-Jun
Country hotel set in 4 acres of wildlife gardens and woodlands with a comfortable bar and licensed restaurant.

SHROPSHIRE
The Redfern Hotel Clebury
Mortimer, Shropshire, DY14 8AA
01299 770595 £80.00
Jan-Sept
11 ensuite rooms, log fire in the bar and AA Rosette for food. Situated close to Ludlow and Ironbridge.

SOMERSET
Oak House
The Square, Axbridge
Nr Cheddar, Somerset, BS26 2AP
01934 732444 From £54.00
Jan-Apr/Jun
Friendly historic hotel in a Medieval market square. All rooms are en-suite and there is a log fire and excellent food.

The Devonshire Arms Hotel ****
Long Sutton, Nr Lingsport
Somerset, TA10 9LP
01458 241271 From £65.00
Jan-Sept
Built as a Hunting Lodge in 1787 this hotel is famed for its food by locals and visitors alike.

The Apple Tree Hotel & Restaurant
Keenethorne, Nr Nether Stowey
Somerset, TA5 1HZ
01278 733238 £50.00
Jan-Sept
Country hotel on the A39 Bridgwater to Minehead road with an emphasis on real fresh food and good service.

SUFFOLK
Brandon House Hotel
High Street
Brandon, Suffolk, IP27 0AX
01842 810171 £65.00
Jan-May
Georgian hotel situated on the edge of a market town offering extensive menus and a warm welcome.

EAST SUSSEX
Granville Hotel
124 Kings Road

Brighton, E Sussex, BN1 2FA
01273 326302 £65.00
Jan-Apr Sun-Thurs
Small town house hotel on Brighton's sea front. Romantic antique four poster beds are available.

Downland Hotel & Restaurant
37 Lewes Road
Emsbourne, E Sussex, BN21 2BU
01323 732689 £75.00
Jan-Sept
Located in a historic town, taking pride in the comfort and quality of its facilities and friendly service.

Grasmere House Hotel
70 Harbarn Road,
Salisbury, Wilt, SP2 8JN
01722 338368 £105.00
Jan-Apr/Aug-Sept
Fine example of a Victorian family residence set in grounds overlooking rivers, meadows and Salisbury Cathedral.

WEST SUSSEX
Black Mill House Hotel ****
Princess Avenue
Bognor Regis, W Sussex, PO21 2QU
01243 821945 £64.00
Jan-Sept
Comfortable family run friendly hotel near Chichester and the South Downs, offering traditional English food and hospitality.

Chequers Hotel ****
Church Place
Pulborough, W Sussex, RH20 1AD
01798 872486 From £79.00
Jan-Sept
Country hotel in Sussex downland village with luxury ensuite rooms, log fire and candlelit award winning restaurant.

Cavendish Hotel ****
115 Marine Parade
Worthing, W Sussex, BN11 3QG
01903 326767 £68.00
Jan-Sept
Prime seafront location and ideal for touring Sussex. Villages and Downs, Chichester, Arundel, Goodwood, Brighton & Lewes.

WARWICKSHIRE
Three Horse Shoes Hotel ****
Rugby, Warwick, CV21 3BX
01788 544585 £68.00
Jan-Sept
300 year old coaching inn featuring beams, open fires and good food

WILTSHIRE
Knoll House
Swindon Road
Malmesbury, Wilt, SN16 9LU
01666 823114 £75.00
Jan-Sept
Located in a historic town, taking pride in the comfort and quality of its facilities and friendly service.

Grasmere House Hotel
70 Harbarn Road,
Salisbury, Wilt, SP2 8JN
01722 338368 £105.00
Jan-Apr/Aug-Sept
Fine example of a Victorian family residence set in grounds overlooking rivers, meadows and Salisbury Cathedral.

The Lamb at Hindon
Hindon
Nr Salisbury, Wilt, SP3 6DP
01747 820573 £75.00
Jan-Aug
17th century Posting Inn in an attractive unsupplied village serving local produce and real ale.

WORCESTERSHIRE
Cedars Hotel
Mason Road
Kidderminster, Wores, DY11 6AL
01562 515595 From £64.00
Jan-Sept
3 star hotel with 22 rooms at reasonable prices and a breakfast to die for.

White Lion Hotel
High Street
Upton on Severn, Wores, WR5 0HU
01684 592551 £74.50
Jan-Sept
An original stone building with beams situated amidst local and modern additions.

NORTH YORKSHIRE
Minotrel Leeming Bar ****
Leeming Bar
Bedale, N Yorks, DL8 1DT
01677 422122 £49.95
Jan-Sept
Clean, comfortable modern hotel near the dales and

situated in the Vale of York.

The Ashcroft Hotel
294 Bishopscote Road
York, YO2 1LF
01904 659286 £80.00 Jan-Sept
Former Victorian mansion with imaginatively decorated ensuite bedrooms, restaurant and bar and set in 2 acres with river views.

Beechwood Close Hotel
19 Shipton Road
York, YO3 6RE
01904 658378 £75.00
Jan-Jul/Sept
There is a warm welcome waiting at this hotel situated in its own grounds with 14 ensuite rooms and a car park.

WEST YORKSHIRE
The Parkgrove Hotel
Park Grove, Fizinghall,
Bradford, W Yorks, BD9 4JY
01274 543444 £60.00
Jan-Sept Thurs-Sun
A Victorian hotel with all facilities which is situated two miles from the city centre.

The Griffin at Leeds
Boar Lane
Leeds, LS1 5DA
0113 242 2555 £60.00
Jan-Sept Fri-Sun
Situated in the heart of Leeds with individually designed en suite rooms and offering realistic prices.

The Flying Horse Country Hotel ****
Nettleton Hill Road, Scapegoat Hill
Huddersfield, W Yorks, HD7 4NY
01484 642368 £64.95
Jan-Sept
Country hotel situated on the edge of the Pennines with unsurpassed views and excellent food served by friendly staff.

IRELAND
Drury Court Hotel 28-30 Lower
Stephens Street Dublin 2, Co
Dublin
00 353 1 4751988 £139.00
Jan-Sept
Built in 1996 the hotel has 32 ultra modern large rooms and is situated minutes from all that Dublin has to offer.

Derrydale Hotel
Carrick Road
Dundalk, Co Louth
00 353 42 35471 £80.00
Jan-Sept
23 bedroom hotel all with modern facilities together with restaurant and bar and close to many sporting activities.

SCOTLAND
Eskdale Hotel
Market Place
Langholm, Dumfries & Galloway,
DG13 0TH
013873 80357 £54.00
Jan-Sept
Former Coaching Inn in the market place providing good food, drinks and accommodation.

Kings Arms Hotel
High Street
Lockerbie, Dumfries & Galloway,
DG11 1JL
01576 202410 £60.00
Jan-Sept
17th century coaching inn boasting that Bonnie Prince Charlie stayed here in 1745 and Sir Walter Scott in 1813

Annandale Arms Hotel ****
High Street
 Moffat, Dumfries & Galloway,
DG10 9HF
01683 220013 £64.00
Jan-Sept
Comfortable Georgian hotel in the centre of the pretty town square of Moffat.

Lowat Arms Hotel
Beauly
Highland, IV4 7BS
01463 782313 £94.00
Jan-Apr/Sept
An ideal base for touring the west coast and highlands of Scotland.

Achilly Hotel Contin, by Strathpeffer
Highland, IV14 9EG
01997 421355 £59.00
Jan-May/Sept
Characteristic hotel. Magnificent scenery. Ideal base for touring. Charming hospitality. Superb food. Congenial, relaxing atmosphere.

Coul House Hotel ****
Contin, by Strathpeffer
Highland, IV14 9EY
01997 421487 From £70.00
Jan-May
Romantic country house in magnificent highland setting. Log fires, home comforts and great cooking.

Grouse & Trout Hotel
Flichy Fair
Highland, IV1 2XE
01808 521314 From £70.00 Apr-Sept
An original stone building with beams situated amidst local and mountains

Craigdarroch House Hotel
Foyers, South Loch Ness Side
Highland, IV1 2XU
01456 486400 £120.00
Jan-Jul/Sept
Panoramic views over Loch Ness, log fires for warmth and comfort and serving excellent cuisine and wines.

Columbia House Hotel & Restau-

Manse Road
Kingscote, Highland, PH21 1TF
01546 661402 £80.00
Jan-Jun
Small, welcoming country house hotel with scenic views, all rooms en-suite, four posters available and private parking.

The Harbour Lights
Garve Road
Ullapool, Highland, IV26 2SX
01854 612222 £65.00
Jan-Jun
A modern comfortable friendly family hotel on the shore of Loch Broom

Mallard Hotel ****
East Links Road
Gullane, Lothian, EH31 2AF
01620 843288 £76.00
Jan-Apr/Jul-Sept
Quietly situated overlooking golf courses with beaches nearby and just 30 minutes from Edinburgh.

Kames Hotel ****
Kames, by Tighnabruich,
Strathclyde, PA21 2AF
01700 811489 £60.00
Jan-Jun
Magnificent views over Kyles of Bute, good food, real ales, fine malt whiskies and a friendly welcome.

The Anchorage Hotel ****
149 Templehill
Troon, Strathclyde, YA10 6BQ
01292 317448 £60.00
Jan-Sept
Family run friendly hotel classed as the oldest licensed premises in town.

Shaftesbury Hotel
1 Hyndford Street
Dundee, DD2 1HQ
01382 669216 £76.00
Jan-Sept Fri-Sun
Former Jute Barons mansion built in 1870 retaining some original features. Rachel's restaurant serves good food.

Lathones Hotel
by Lathones
St Andrews, Fife, KY9 1JE
01344 840494 From £76.00
Jan-Mar
14 bedroom country hotel 4 miles from St Andrews with restaurant, bars and parking.

WALES
Bryn Derwen Hotel ****
Aberystwyth
Llangollen, Chwyd, LL20 8EF
01978 860583 £65.00
Jan-Sept
A warm welcome awaits you in this homely hotel overlooking the steam railway and the picturesque Vale of Llangollen.

Hotel Mariners
Mariners Square
Haverfordwest, Dyfed, SA61 2DU
01437 763353 From £67.50
Jan-May
17th century family run hotel centrally situated in a quiet part of town, an excellent base for touring South West Wales.

The Black Lion Royal Hotel ****
High Street
Lampeter, Dyfed, SA48 7BG
01570 421272 £58.00
Jan-Sept
Family run 18th century coaching inn situated in the centre of town, excellent for touring Cambrian Mountains and nearby coast.

Castle Hotel ****
Kings Road
Llanidloes, Dyfed, SA20 0AW
01550 720343 £65.00
Jan-Sept
'Over the hills and far away' but a superb destination.

Court Colman Hotel
Peny Fai
Bridgend, Glam, CF31 4NG
01656 720212 £78.50
Jan-Feb
The hotel is situated in 6 acres of tranquil grounds ideal for business or a relaxing weekend.

The Riverside Hotel
Cinderhill Street
Monmouth, Gwent, NP25 3EY
01600 715577 £71.00
Jan-Sept
A prime hotel offering a warm welcome, quality rooms and a restaurant with professional service.

Bryn Tirion Hotel ****
Red Wharf Bay
Anglesey, Gwynedd, LL75 8RZ
01248 852366 From £65.00
Jan-Sept
A prime hotel offering a warm welcome, quality rooms and a restaurant with professional service.

Dragon Hotel ****
Montgomery,
Powys, SY15 6PA
01686 668359 £72.00 Jan-Sept
17th century family run Coaching Inn with indoor swimming pool, fine restaurant, real ales and well located for peaceful walking.

Usk Hotel ****

How to Qualify
To qualify for your 2 for 1 break, you must collect four differently numbered tokens from the nine we are printing in The Independent and The Independent on Sunday 19 January. Then attach them to one of the vouchers we are printing in The Independent on Tuesday 14 January and Saturday 18 January and in The Independent on Sunday 19 January (in confirmation booking form will also be published on those dates). When you have four tokens and a voucher, simply follow the booking procedure outlined below. If you would like to take more than one 2 for 1 break, just collect four tokens and one voucher for each separate occasion that you wish to go. Yesterday in The Independent we printed Token 1; today we print Token 2. Token 3 will be printed in tomorrow's Independent.

Booking Procedure
1. All bookings must be made by telephone direct with each individual hotel. Callers must identify themselves as 'Independent 2 for 1 voucher holders' as some hotels may have standard or superior rooms available at normal rates when their allocation of 2 for 1 rooms is full.
2. All bookings must be pre-paid and reservations can be confirmed over the telephone by credit card holders at most hotels.
3. Voucher holders wishing to pay by other methods can make a provisional booking by phone which the hotel will keep open for 48 hours pending receipt of the confirmation booking form and payment which will be acknowledged by the hotel on the day it is received. If you do not receive such an acknowledgement within seven days, you are advised to contact the hotel.
4. Vouchers must be surrendered on arrival at the hotel and can be used on one occasion only.
5. Vouchers are valid from 11 January to 30 September

Free bottle of wine

Terms and Conditions
1. To participate in our 2 for 1 offer you must collect 4 differently numbered tokens, including one from the Independent on Sunday and attach them to a voucher. If you would like to take more than one 2 for 1 break, just collect four tokens and one voucher for each separate occasion that you wish to go.
2. The voucher may be redeemed at any participating Minotel hotel (as listed in the Independent on Sunday, 12 January, and The Independent, 13 January) for one free night's bed and breakfast for two people in a standard twin or double room when the first night's bed and breakfast is pre-purchased at the price indicated.
3. Some hotels, at the proprietor's discretion, will accept the voucher for longer stays on the same basis, so you

can stay for 4 nights for the price of 2 for example. Please check with your chosen hotel when making your booking.
4. The voucher does not cover payment for any other meals or services that may be requested by the holder and cannot be used with any other offer, saving or discount that may be available at the hotel.
5. No bookings will be accepted for Bank holiday periods.
6. Bookings for January, February, March and April cannot be made more than 8 weeks in advance. Bookings for May and September cannot be made more than 4 weeks in advance. Bookings for June, July and August cannot be made more than 7 days in advance.
7. Vouchers are valid from 11 January to 30 September 1997.
8. Vouchers must be surrendered on arrival at the hotel and can be used on one occasion only.
9. No shows or cancellations from 14 days prior to the anticipated date of arrival at the hotel will render the voucher invalid and the holder liable for payment in full for each night booked, including those previously offered free.
10. All bookings made under this promotion are subject to availability and to the selected hotel's own period of availability and terms and conditions, except where those conditions may differ from those in which case those conditions shall prevail.
11. Photocopies of tokens and vouchers are not acceptable.
12. One child, under the age of 12 years at the time of booking and sharing a room with two adults will be accommodated free of charge but all meals, including breakfast, will be chargeable.
13. The descriptions and prices contained in this offer have been supplied by participating hotels. While every effort has been made to ensure their accuracy prior to publication, no responsibility can be taken by Newspaper Publishing plc, Chateaufort Promotions or Minotel for any error, omissions or changes that may take place afterwards without notice.

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THE INDEPENDENT

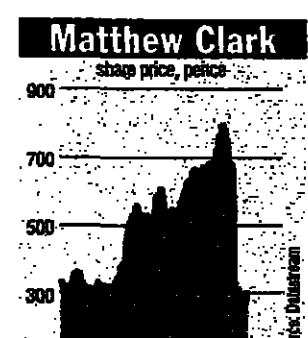
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It could also offer guidance about its future direction. Currencies and metal prices have not been favourable and pre-exceptional profits should be around £166m.

Carpentryright, also on Thursday, should have a cheerful tale with half-year profits likely to be 40 per cent up at £14m.

It should also be a beneficiary of the spending boom which should be created by the stampede by mutual societies to convert to plc status. Carpetright has a fine record but its aggressive stores opening programme has been

likened to carpet bombing – and sooner rather than later it could run out of targets.



Share Price Data											
Prices are in dollars unless otherwise stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up 10 percent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Source: FT Information											
The Independent Index											
The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from London Stock Exchange. Simply dial 0891 123 336, and when prompted to do so, enter the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0891 1233 followed by the share's two-digit code below.											
Interest Rates											
UK Base 6.00% Discount 2.50% Prime 8.00% Germany 5.00% France 4.00% Discount 4.00% US 5.25% Japan 5.00% Switzerland 4.00% Netherlands 3.25% Denmark 4.00% Sweden 4.00% Australia 2.50% Discount 3.25% (see page 41)											
Retailers, Food											
0000	1.00	0.00	0001	1.00	0.00	0002	1.00	0.00	0003	1.00	0.00
0004	1.00	0.00	0005	1.00	0.00	0006	1.00	0.00	0007	1.00	0.00
0008	1.00	0.00	0009	1.00	0.00	0010	1.00	0.00	0011	1.00	0.00
0012	1.00	0.00	0013	1.00	0.00	0014	1.00	0.00	0015	1.00	0.00
0016	1.00	0.00	0017	1.00	0.00	0018	1.00	0.00	0019	1.00	0.00
0020	1.00	0.00	0021	1.00	0.00	0022	1.00	0.00	0023	1.00	0.00
0024	1.00	0.00	0025	1.00	0.00	0026	1.00	0.00	0027	1.00	0.00
0028	1.00	0.00	0029	1.00	0.00	0030	1.00	0.00	0031	1.00	0.00
0032	1.00	0.00	0033	1.00	0.00	0034	1.00	0.00	0035	1.00	0.00
0036	1.00	0.00	0037	1.00	0.00	0038	1.00	0.00	0039	1.00	0.00
0040	1.00	0.00	0041	1.00	0.00	0042	1.00	0.00	0043	1.00	0.00
0044	1.00	0.00	0045	1.00	0.00	0046	1.00	0.00	0047	1.00	0.00
0048	1.00	0.00	0049	1.00	0.00	0050	1.00	0.00	0051	1.00	0.00
0052	1.00	0.00	0053	1.00	0.00	0054	1.00	0.00	0055	1.00	0.00
0056	1.00	0.00	0057	1.00	0.00	0058	1.00	0.00	0059	1.00	0.00
0060	1.00	0.00	0061	1.00	0.00	0062	1.00	0.00	0063	1.00	0.00
0064	1.00	0.00	0065	1.00	0.00	0066	1.00	0.00	0067	1.00	0.00
0068	1.00	0.00	0069	1.00	0.00	0070	1.00	0.00	0071	1.00	0.00
0072	1.00	0.00	0073	1.00	0.00	0074	1.00	0.00	0075	1.00	0.00
0076	1.00	0.00	0077	1.00	0.00	0078	1.00	0.00	0079	1.00	0.00
0080	1.00	0.00	0081	1.00	0.00	0082	1.00	0.00	0083	1.00	0.00
0084	1.00	0.00	0085	1.00	0.00	0086	1.00	0.00	0087	1.00	0.00
0088	1.00	0.00	0089	1.00	0.00	0090	1.00	0.00	0091	1.00	0.00
0092	1.00	0.00	0093	1.00	0.00	0094	1.00	0.00	0095	1.00	0.00
0096	1.00	0.00	0097	1.00	0.00	0098	1.00	0.00	0099	1.00	0.00
0100	1.00	0.00	0101	1.00	0.00	0102	1.00	0.00	0103	1.00	0.00
0104	1.00	0.00	0105	1.00	0.00	0106	1.00	0.00	0107	1.00	0.00
0108	1.00	0.00	0109	1.00	0.00	0110	1.00	0.00	0111	1.00	0.00
0112	1.00	0.00	0113	1.00	0.00	0114	1.00	0.00	0115	1.00	0.00
0116	1.00	0.00	0117	1.00	0.00	0118	1.00	0.00	0119	1.00	0.00
0120	1.00	0.00	0121	1.00	0.00	0122	1.00	0.00	0123	1.00	0.00
0124	1.00	0.00	0125	1.00	0.00	0126	1.00	0.00	0127	1.00	0.00
0128	1.00	0.00	0129	1.00	0.00	0130	1.00	0.00	0131	1.00	0.00
0132	1.00	0.00	0133	1.00	0.00	0134	1.00	0.00	0135	1.00	0.00
0136	1.00	0.00	0137	1.00	0.00	0138	1.00	0.00	0139	1.00	0.00
0140	1.00	0.00	0141	1.00	0.00	0142	1.00	0.00	0143	1.00	0.00
0144	1.00	0.00	0145	1.00	0.00	0146	1.00	0.00	0147	1.00	0.00
0148	1.00	0.00	0149	1.00	0.00	0150	1.00	0.00	0151	1.00	0.00
0152	1.00	0.00	0153	1.00	0.00	0154	1.00	0.00	0155	1.00	0.00
0156	1.00	0.00	0157	1.00	0.00	0158	1.00	0.00	0159	1.00	0.00
0160	1.00	0.00	0161	1.00	0.00	0162	1.00	0.00	0163	1.00	0.00
0164	1.00	0.00	0165	1.00	0.00	0166	1.00	0.00	0167	1.00	0.00
0168	1.00	0.00	0169	1.00	0.00	0170	1.00	0.00	0171	1.00	0.00
0172	1.00	0.00	0173	1.00	0.00	0174	1.00	0.00	0175	1.00	0.00
0176	1.00	0.00	0177	1.00	0.00	0178	1.00	0.00	0179	1.00	0.00
0180	1.00	0.00	0181	1.00	0.00	0182	1.00	0.00	0183	1.00	0.00
0184	1.00	0.00	0185	1.00	0.00	0186	1.00	0.00	0187	1.00	0.00
0188	1.00	0.00	0189	1.00	0.00	0190	1.00	0.00	0191	1.00	0.00
0192	1.00	0.00	0193	1.00	0.00	0194	1.00	0.00	0195	1.00	0.00
0196	1.00	0.00	0197	1.00	0.00	0198	1.00	0.00	0199	1.00	0.00
0200	1.00	0.00	0201	1.00	0.00	0202	1.00	0.00	0203	1.00	0.00
0204	1.00	0.00	0205	1.00	0.00	0206	1.00	0.00	0207	1.00	0.00
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0216	1.00	0.00	0217	1.00	0.00	0218	1.00	0.00	0219	1.00	0.00
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0224	1.00	0.00	0225	1.00	0.00	0226	1.00	0.00	0227	1.00	0.00
0228	1.00	0.00	0229	1.00	0.00	0230	1.00	0.00	0231	1.00	0.00
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0240	1.00	0.00	0241	1.00	0.00	0242	1.00	0.00	0243	1.00	0.00
0244	1.00	0.00	0245	1.00	0.00	0246	1.00	0.00	0247	1.00	0.00
0248	1.00	0.00	0249	1.00	0.00	0250	1.00	0.00	0251	1.00	0.00
0252	1.00	0.00	0253	1.00	0.00	0254	1.00	0.00	0255	1.00	0.00
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0264	1.00	0.00	0265	1.00	0.00	0266	1.00	0.00	0267	1.00	0.00
0268	1.00	0.00	0269	1.00	0.00	0270	1.00	0.00	0271	1.00	0.00
0272	1.00	0.00	0273	1.00	0.00	0274	1.00	0.00	0275	1.00	0.00
0276	1.00	0.00	0277	1.00	0.00	0278	1.00	0.00	0279	1.00	0.00
0280	1.00	0.00	0281	1.00	0.00	0282	1.00	0.00	0283	1.00	0.00
0284	1.00	0.00	0285	1.00	0.00	0286	1.00	0.00	0287	1.00	0.00
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0296	1.00	0.00	0297	1.00	0.00	0298	1.00	0.00	0299	1.00	0.00
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0304	1.00	0.00	0305	1.00	0.00	0306	1.00	0.00	0307	1.00	0.00
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0312	1.00	0.00	0313	1.00	0.00	0314	1.00	0.00	0315	1.00	0.00
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0336	1.00	0.00	0337	1.00	0.00	0338	1.00	0.00	0339	1.00	0.00
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0356	1.00	0.00	0357	1.00	0.00	0358	1.00	0.00	0359	1.00	0.00
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0364	1.00	0.00	0365	1.00	0.00	0366	1.00	0.00	0367	1.00	0.00
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0376	1.00	0.00	0377	1.00	0.00	0378	1.00	0.00	0379	1.00	0.00
0380	1.00	0.00	0381	1.00	0.00	0382	1.00	0.00	0383	1.00	0.00
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0396	1.00	0.00	0397	1.00	0.00	0398	1.00	0.00	0399	1.00	0.00
0400	1.00	0.00	0401	1.00	0.00	0402	1.00	0.00	0403	1.00	0.00
0404	1.00	0.00	0405	1.00	0.00	0406	1.00	0.00	0407	1.00	0.00
0408	1.00	0.00	0409	1.00	0.00	0410	1.00	0.00	0411	1.00	0.00
0412	1.00	0.00	0413	1.00	0.00	0414	1.00	0.00	0415	1.00	0.00
0416	1.00	0.00	0417	1.00	0.00	0418	1.00	0.00	0419	1.00	0.00
0420	1.00	0.00	0421	1.00	0.00	0422	1.00	0.00	0423	1.00	0.00
0424	1.00	0.00	0425	1.00	0.00	0426	1.00	0.00	0427	1.00	0.00
0428	1.00	0.0									

Commodities		Grains		Oilseeds		Meats		Dairy		Softs		Metals		Energy		Futures	
Wheat	12.50	Wheat	12.50	Soybeans	10.00	Beef	15.00	Milk	18.00	Cotton	1.50	Gold	1200.00	Natural Gas	3.50	Crude Oil	45.00
Barley	8.00	Barley	8.00	Canola	12.00	Pork	12.00	Cheese	22.00	Wool	2.00	Silver	18.00	Heating Oil	2.50	Gasoline	2.80
Oats	6.00	Oats	6.00	Mustard	15.00	Lamb	18.00	Butter	25.00	Aluminum	1.20	Palladium	1500.00	Jet Fuel	3.00	Bitumen	1.50
Rye	7.00	Rye	7.00	Flaxseed	18.00	Chicken	10.00	Eggs	20.00	Copper	0.80	Platinum	1000.00	Distillate	2.20	Asphalt	1.20
Millet	5.00	Millet	5.00	Sunflower	14.00	Veal	16.00	Yogurt	19.00	Iron Ore	0.50	Rhodium	2000.00	Lighter	2.00	Coal	1.00
Buckwheat	9.00	Buckwheat	9.00	Peas	11.00	Ham	14.00	Ice Cream	21.00	Nickel	0.40	Iridium	1200.00	Propane	1.80	Wood	0.80
Sorghum	7.50	Sorghum	7.50	Lentils	13.00	Roast Beef	17.00	Soft Ice Cream	23.00	Zinc	0.30	Pt. 1000	1000.00	Butane	1.50	Steel	0.50
Triticale	8.50	Triticale	8.50	Chickpeas	12.00	Salami	15.00	Frozen Yogurt	20.00	Lead	0.20	Pt. 500	500.00	LP Gas	1.20	Aluminum	0.50
Amaranth	6.50	Amaranth	6.50	Black Beans	10.00	Hot Dogs	11.00	Condensed Milk	19.00	Vanadium	0.10	Pt. 250	250.00	Heating Oil	2.50	Steel	0.50
Quinoa	9.50	Quinoa	9.50	Pinto Beans	9.00	Bratwurst	12.00	Evaporated Milk	20.00	Chromium	0.05	Pt. 100	100.00	Propane	1.80	Steel	0.50
Millet	5.00	Millet	5.00	Navy Beans	8.00	Chorizo	13.00	Whole Milk	21.00	Manganese	0.02	Pt. 50	50.00	Butane	1.50	Steel	0.50
Buckwheat	9.00	Buckwheat	9.00	Great Northern	7.00	Pepperoni	14.00	2% Milk	22.00	Antimony	0.01	Pt. 25	25.00	LP Gas	1.20	Steel	0.50
Sorghum	7.50	Sorghum	7.50	Black Beans	10.00	Sausage	15.00	1% Milk	23.00	Strontium	0.005	Pt. 10	10.00	Heating Oil	2.50	Steel	0.50
Triticale	8.50	Triticale	8.50	Pinto Beans	9.00	Hot Dogs	11.00	Half and Half	24.00	Barium	0.002	Pt. 5	5.00	Propane	1.80	Steel	0.50
Amaranth	6.50	Amaranth	6.50	Navy Beans	8.00	Bratwurst	12.00	Condensed Milk	20.00	Yttrium	0.001	Pt. 2	2.00	Butane	1.50	Steel	0.50
Quinoa	9.50	Quinoa	9.50	Great Northern	7.00	Chorizo	13.00	Evaporated Milk	21.00	Indium	0.0005	Pt. 1	1.00	LP Gas	1.20	Steel	0.50
Millet	5.00	Millet	5.00	Black Beans	10.00	Sausage	15.00	Whole Milk	22.00	Terbium	0.0001	Pt. 0.5	0.50	Heating Oil	2.50	Steel	0.50
Buckwheat	9.00	Buckwheat	9.00	Pinto Beans	9.00	Hot Dogs	11.00	2% Milk	23.00	Erbium	0.00005	Pt. 0.2	0.20	Propane	1.80	Steel	0.50
Sorghum	7.50	Sorghum	7.50	Navy Beans	8.00	Bratwurst	12.00	1% Milk	24.00	Neodymium	0.00001	Pt. 0.1	0.10	Butane	1.50	Steel	0.50
Triticale	8.50	Triticale	8.50	Great Northern	7.00	Chorizo	13.00	Half and Half	25.00	Praseodymium	0.000005	Pt. 0.05	0.05	LP Gas	1.20	Steel	0.50
Amaranth	6.50	Amaranth	6.50	Black Beans	10.00	Sausage	15.00	Condensed Milk	26.00	Samarium	0.000001	Pt. 0.02	0.02	Heating Oil	2.50	Steel	0.50
Quinoa	9.50	Quinoa	9.50	Pinto Beans	9.00	Hot Dogs	11.00	Evaporated Milk	27.00	Promethium	0.0000005	Pt. 0.01	0.01	Propane	1.80	Steel	0.50
Millet	5.00	Millet	5.00	Navy Beans	8.00												

business & city

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BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

£5bn C&W deal runs into snags

Chris Godsmark
and Mathew Horsman

The landmark £5bn deal brokered by Cable & Wireless to merge its Mercury phone subsidiary with three cable companies is unlikely to meet the planned April deadline after a hitting a series of obstacles. Sources have pointed to growing disagreements between the companies involved, with insiders blaming a clash of cultures between the notoriously bureaucratic Cable & Wireless

and the smaller cable operators. In a move to speed up the process, a large team of management consultants from the Boston Consulting Group has been deployed, along with public relations advisers Brunswick. However, concern has been expressed that C&W, essentially a telecommunications business, has little previous experience of the television industry. The deal, which would see C&W with a controlling stake in the company, is now thought to be unlikely to be completed

until the summer. Another problem is the sheer complexity of the task, with lawyers and brokers acting for Mercury, Nynex CableComms and Bell Cablemedia, which is in the process of taking over Videotron's UK operations. The difficulties have emerged as the joint steering group organising the merger, headed by C&W director Stephen Pettit, has been forced to postpone the announcement of a chief executive to run the new company, to be called Cable &

Wireless Communications. The appointment was due to be announced on 6 January, but speculation is mounting inside the various organisations that the original preferred candidate for the job has unexpectedly turned it down. Another theory is that the post has been offered to an American from the entertainment or computing industries but the appointment has become bogged down in contractual difficulties. Mr Pettit has kept the shortlist a closely guarded secret,

though two preferred candidates were thought to be Adam Singer, president of TCI's international division, and Mike Harris, head of the Prudential's banking arm and a former C&W executive. However, Mr Singer is also believed to have turned down the job after concern at the way the deal was being organised. Sources have complained that failure to appoint a chief executive has led to a damaging lack of leadership, not so far alleviated by the appointment of

Dick Brown as chief executive of C&W last July. Meanwhile, Dan Somers, the chief executive of Bell Cablemedia, has told colleagues he will return to Canada to work at Bell Canada Enterprises, the parent company. He has been removed from the list of possible candidates for the C&W Communications top job. It is understood that Duncan Lewis, the former chief executive of Mercury who left Granada Media Group late last year after a row with the head office,

has also been ruled out, following at least two meetings between Mr Lewis and Mr Brown. They are believed to have decided it would be "inappropriate" for Mr Lewis' name to be added to the list of candidates. John Killian, chief executive of Nynex CableComms, another merger partner, has also been ruled out. He was kept out of the secret discussions that led to the dramatic merger, announced last year. Bell Cablemedia and Videotron, meanwhile, are

making further progress on their own merger, which is seen as a first step toward finalising the broader merger of the four companies within Cable & Wireless Communications. In the next few weeks, most of BCM's staff will be relocated to Videotron's Hammersmith headquarters. The four companies involved in the merger are bracing themselves for thousands of job losses, with several senior and mid-management executives likely to lose their posts.

Magnox merger deadline agreed

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Hopes of a pre-election breakthrough in merger talks between Magnox Electric, the state-owned company which runs ageing nuclear power stations, and British Nuclear Fuels, the reprocessing organisation, have risen after the two sides agreed to a provisional deadline in negotiations with the Government.

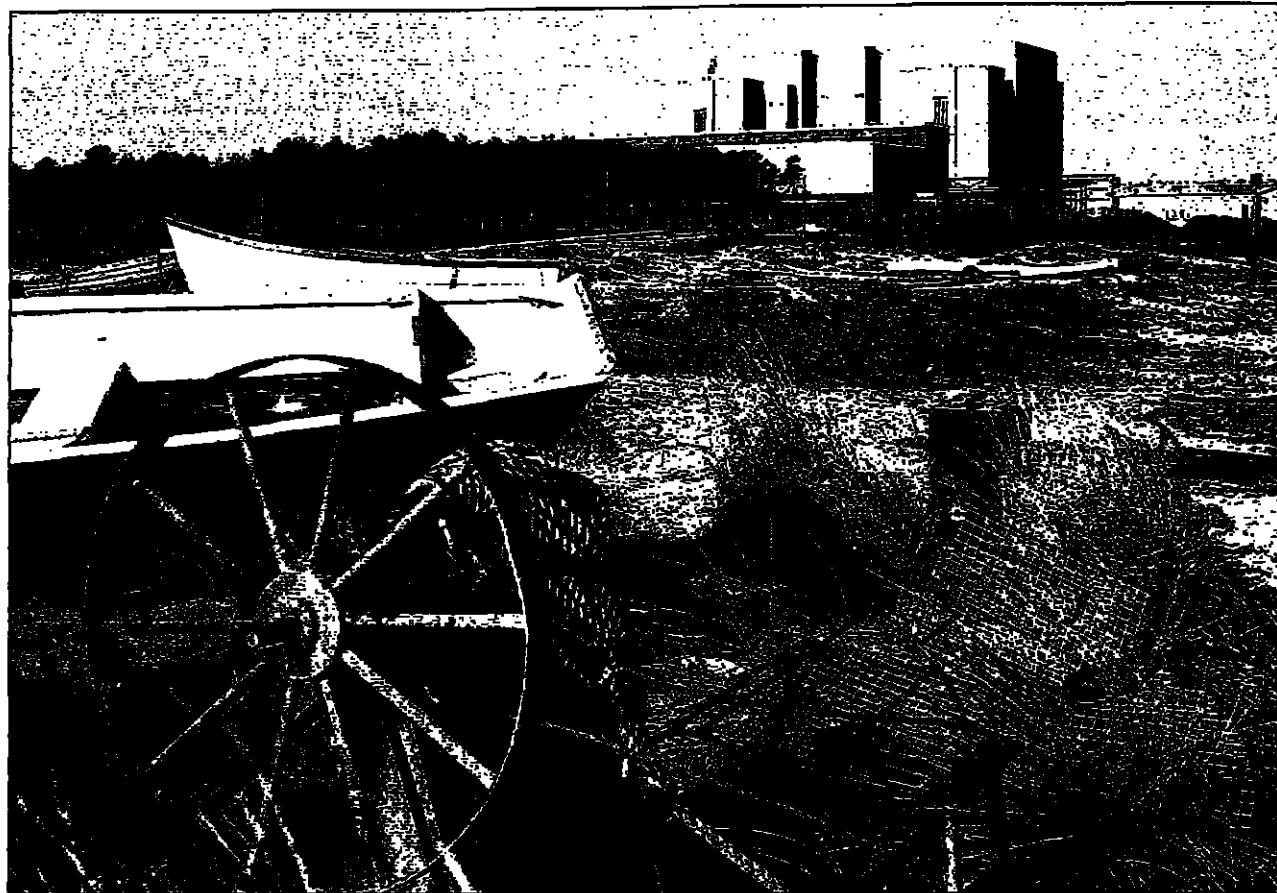
Ministers aim to transfer responsibility for Magnox Electric, created last April in the restructuring of the nuclear industry, to BNFL, which does much of the decommissioning work at its Sellafield complex. The talks became deadlocked because of BNFL's unhappiness at having to take over part of Magnox's £8.9bn decommissioning costs.

However, in a private exchange of letters between Lord Fraser, energy minister, Mark Baker, Magnox chairman, and

John Taylor, BNFL chief executive, the three sides agreed to work towards securing a deal by the end of next month. Letters of intent to seal the agreement are due to be signed in March, with the merger completed in April 1998.

Sources suggested that though the timetable had been agreed, there was much work to be done on how to bridge the huge funding gap. Of the £8.9bn estimate for decommissioning all nine of Magnox's reactors, some £1.3bn still has to be found. The Government last year agreed to guarantee £3.7bn of the costs, while Magnox has set aside cash and future revenue streams worth £3.9bn.

Though BNFL is state-owned it in effect runs as a private business and has made clear to ministers it would refuse to take on £1.3bn of liabilities without Treasury help. BNFL has set its sights on commercial reprocessing and waste management work overseas.



Funding gap: Of the £8.9bn estimate for decommissioning all nine of Magnox's reactors, £1.3bn still has to be found

Sears shoes told to pull its socks up

Magnus Grimond

Sears, the Selfridges to Dolcis retailing giant, is ready to sell or demerge its troubled shoe business if there is no improvement by this summer.

Liam Strong, the chief executive, who is under growing pressure from large shareholders to resign or institute a break-up of the sprawling group after last week's profits warning, is pinning his hopes that spring ranges shortly to be launched by new management can still revive the fortunes of the British Shoe Corporation operation.

Management, led by BSC managing director Rebecca Cotterell, have been told they have until the summer to prove that new systems, improved formats and customer service put in over the past year can produce results or the business will be disposed of.

But Mr Strong's hand may be forced if the collapsing share price, which at 88p on Friday is near recent lows, prompts a break-up bid for the company. One report over the weekend claimed that millionaire entrepreneur Richard Caring was putting together just such a bid with German mail order group Otto Versand, which lost out with the lowest offer in the recent auction of Sears' Free-mans mail order business.

Mr Strong, who is expected to announce the sale of that operation for around £375m to Littlewoods early this week, is understood to have the backing of his board, headed by non-executive chairman Sir Bob Reid,

in setting his face against wholesale demerger for now.

One insider said yesterday: "A huge amount of change and restructuring has gone on and spring is the first time we will see ranges from the new management put in in December 1995. This will be critical to see what the potential of the shoe business is going to be."

"So the great about that Sears is going to sell the shoe business is not right, because we have got to see what is going to happen. But it would be wrong to exclude the possibility if it doesn't perform."

A demerger would be considered if the rationale could be shown to be "very good", the source said.

Even so, the City is likely to remain sceptical about Mr Strong's ability to turn around the UK shoes business, now encompassing Shoe Express, Shoe City, Dolcis and a chain of department store concessions, which saw profits slump from £2m to just £600,000 in the six months to July. One analyst said yesterday: "I'm not sure whether new ranges are enough to shift perceptions of the business. Essentially it's a replacement market: the number of shoes per head bought is low."

She expressed doubts whether a management whose background was in clothing was the right team to revive a shoes business.

Opinion amongst Sears' major shareholders about Mr Strong's future is still not clear-cut in the wake of the profit warning.

Halewood's future hinges on new Escort model

Diane Coyle
and Chris Godsmark

Managers of Ford will meet union representatives at Halewood on Thursday to discuss whether or not the new Escort model will be built there. If the company decides against it on cost-cutting grounds it is likely to be the death sentence for the plant.

Unions have agreed to the

outsourcing of production that will reduce the number of employees at Ford's Merseyside plant by natural wastage. But the company is seeking new working practices that will cut several hundred jobs out of more than 4,000 to save money.

Last week Ford announced that it had made losses of \$472m in Europe in the third quarter after profits of \$269m in the first half of 1996. Last year

Escort's UK market share fell below 20 per cent for the first time.

The car industry negotiator for the Transport and General Union, Tony Woodley, said that if the company decided against manufacturing the Escort on Merseyside, the union reaction would be "serious and instant".

"It will be for the company to announce whether the new Escort will be built there. If not,

that has got massive implications for assembly at Halewood. It would in effect close it," he said.

Thursday's meeting was called by the company and will be attended by its head of manufacturing in Europe, Ford has already told employees in Valencia, Spain, and Saarbrücken, Germany, that they will build the new model.

Car making on Merseyside

has been turbulent since the leading manufacturers opened plants there in the 1950s and 1960s during government drives to boost regional economic development. British Leyland, the previous incarnation of Rover, closed its site at Speke, which made Triumphs, at the end of the 1970s after an appalling record for productivity, quality and union disruption.

Halewood's future was also

periodically in doubt, with a reputation gained during the 1970s as one of Ford's worst manufacturing sites. However vast productivity strides saved the plant in the early 1990s and its current problems have come as a surprise to industry experts.

In contrast, Vauxhall recently announced a £300m investment programme at its plant at Ellesmere Port, securing the future of 3,500 staff.

EMU depends on strong political links

Diane Coyle discovers the challenges facing the man preparing Europe for a single currency

It is no surprise that Alexandre Lamfalussy, the Belgian banker in charge of preparing Europe for the single currency, is optimistic about its introduction in less than two years.

What is more remarkable is his new willingness to link the success of monetary union to political integration, with a frankness unusual in central banking circles. In an exclusive interview with *The Independent*, Mr Lamfalussy highlighted the need for wide policy co-ordination as the biggest potential hurdle in the way of the successful operation of European monetary union.

He said: "We need closer economic and political co-operation. I don't want to say political union because its content is vague... but there will be areas in which we have to get closer. That will be forced by monetary union and that is the greatest challenge."

It is a view likely to confirm the worst fears of Britain's Europhobes. It also reconciles

THE MONDAY INTERVIEW ALEXANDRE LAMFALUSSY

French demands for a "stability council" which would give finance ministers a strong voice in economic policy and German determination that the new European Central Bank will be as independent and tough as the Bundesbank.

There would need to be explicit co-ordination of fiscal policies, on top of the harmonisation of taxes that was already under way within the single market, Mr Lamfalussy said. Speaking from the European Monetary Institute's eyrie high above the snow-bound streets of Frankfurt, he said: "This is a unique enterprise. All of this is experimental."

Mr Lamfalussy's other, equally strong, message for Europe's politicians is that they are wrong to blame high unemployment and stagnant growth on the need to meet the Maas-

tricht criteria. Soaring government debt levels meant the unpopular measures governments on the Continent were taking to reduce government deficits would have been essential anyway, he argued.

On the use of Maastricht as the culprit, Mr Lamfalussy said: "It is a mistake from a tactical point of view because it discredits EMU in the eyes of the public."

He concedes that the single currency has prodded governments into action: "Maastricht was welcome because it puts you against a deadline."

But he regrets the negative associations the M-word has come to have in the public mind. "This is unfair and regrettable," he said.

For all his alertness to the political forces driving progress towards the single currency, Mr

Lamfalussy insisted that the European Central Bank he was busy bringing into being would be independent of politicians' influence. But the personality of its first executives would be crucial, he said.

"There is a high probability that the ECB will be able to resist very successfully any political pressure. That there will be political pressure is clear."

He added: "There is no doubt the choice of people will matter a lot."

Apart from the defence provided by its statutes, which guarantee independence, Mr Lamfalussy said the ECB's strongest card was the existence of a culture of price stability in Europe.

"The policy of combating inflation is already there. We have achieved price stability in a growing number of countries. It has already happened," he said.

For the same reason, he denied suggestions that the ECB would have to start out being ex-



Alexandre Lamfalussy: 'I'd be delighted if UK joined'

tremely tough in its interest rate decisions in order to establish its credibility. The credibility already exists, in his opinion. "Why, when you come together, should you suddenly start to

behave in a different way?" Mr Lamfalussy did not, however, accept the view widespread in Frankfurt that monetary union would necessarily exclude the Mediterranean countries to begin with - a diplomatic stance, perhaps. Although the presence of Italy and Spain at the start would raise doubts in the financial markets about credibility, Mr Lamfalussy said: "We do have a reasonable chance that quite a number of countries will meet the budget commitment."

He denied, too, that this could only be achieved by letting standards slip. "To say now that we will have to fudge is going a little bit too fast. By the summer we will begin to see the likely outcome," he said.

Like many others on the Continent, he hopes for a clearer view of Britain's position by then too.

"I would be delighted if the UK joined," he said. "Monetary union would be poorer without Britain."

STOCK MARKETS									
FTSE 100									
Index	Close	Week's chg	Range (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	Yield (%)			
FTSE 100	4056.80	-32.9	-0.8	4118.50	3632.30	3.84			
FTSE 250	4507.80	+14.2	+0.3	4568.60	4015.30	3.48			
FTSE 350	2021.30	-11.4	-0.6	2043.80	1816.60	3.76			
FTSE SmallCap	2234.64	+45.6	+2.1	2244.36	1954.06	3.02			
FTSE All-Share	1996.91	-7.1	-0.4	2013.66	1791.95	3.70			
New York	6703.79	+159.7	+2.4	6703.79	5032.94	2.03			
Tokyo	17303.65	-2057.7	-10.6	22666.80	17303.65	0.861			
Hong Kong	13191.50	-31.3	-0.2	13330.95	10204.87	3.151			
Frankfurt	2933.39	+74.1	+2.6	2933.39	2253.36	1.581			

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES									
UK interest rates									
Bank of England base rate	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
3 month	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
6 month	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
1 year	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
2 year	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
3 year	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
5 year	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
10 year	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
15 year	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
20 year	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
25 year	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
30 year	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00

CURRENCIES									
£/\$									
Index	Close	Week's chg	Yr chg	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	Yield (%)			
\$ (London)	1.6803	-0.15c	-1.5472	1.6803	1.5472	0.5951	+0.40	0.8463	
\$ (New York)	1.6803	-0.15c	-1.5466	1.6803	1.5466	0.5942	+0.23	0.8466	
DM (London)	2.6617	+2.98pt	2.2289	2.6617	2.2289	0.5841	+2.66pt	1.4407	
¥ (London)	194.772	-11.815	162.575	194.772	162.575	0.115	-10.285	105.080	
₹ (London)	96.1	+0.3	83.3	96.1	83.3	99.0	-0.1	94.6	

OTHER INDICATORS									
Oil Brent \$	24.42	+0.43	17.41	RPI	153.9	+2.7pt	149.8	16 Jan	
Gold \$	359.30	-3.90	399.20	GDP	108.9	+2.3pt	105.7	27 Jan	
Gold £	213.83	-0.85	258.01	Base Rates	6.00pc	6.75			

مكتبة الامم



GAVYN DAVIES

'For most of the past two years, Japanese purchases of US bonds alone have been averaging about \$60bn at an annual rate, a factor which has clearly helped to hold down global bond yields and thereby boost equity prices in America and elsewhere'

World will catch a cold if Japan gets pneumonia

The most important event in the world's financial markets so far in the new year has undoubtedly been the continuing slide in the Japanese stock market. In the past two months, the Nikkei index has dropped by about 20 per cent, and there are fears that this collapse in Japan will soon begin to undermine the strength of financial markets in the rest of the world – especially in countries such as the US and the UK, which have benefited from Japanese capital inflows in the past, and would stand to be hit quite hard if these flows were repatriated.

There is no doubt that capital outflows from Japan have been large in recent years, as indeed they have to be to offset the trade surplus which has still been running at over \$60bn a year. For most of the past two years, Japanese purchases of US bonds alone have been averaging about \$60bn at an annual rate, a factor which has clearly helped to hold down global bond yields and thereby boost equity prices in America and elsewhere. In addition to this, there have been sizeable purchases of sterling and other high-yielding Anglo-Saxon currencies (the dollars of the US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia have all been recipients at one time or another), essentially funded by borrowing in yen at interest rates of 0.5 per cent or less. These so-called 'carry trades' have been very popular among the hedge funds and other leveraged investment entities, and there could be serious shock waves in the financial markets if they were suddenly reversed. Not only would the yen strengthen sharply, but the fuel which has been supporting bond and equity prices outside of Japan might be threatened.

Fortunately, it is difficult to envisage a sudden reversal at the present time. At root, most

of these flows are driven by the existence of aggressively easy monetary policy by the Bank of Japan, and there is no reason whatsoever to believe that this is likely to change in the next few months.

Let us look at the three most important sources of capital outflow in turn. First, there are the private flows out of Japanese investment institutions into foreign bonds. These outflows have been particularly high in the second half of 1996, running at an annual rate of over \$30bn by the end of the year.

There is some danger that these flows could be partially reversed if the weakness in the Japanese stock market is maintained. Certainly, in the past, there has been a correlation between the health of the domestic equity market and the outflow into foreign assets, and the weeks before the Japanese financial year end in April are typically a vulnerable period.

But the fact of the matter is that the differential between US and Japanese bond

yields remains extremely high at about 4 per cent per annum, and the Japanese financial institutions still have a huge appetite for yield. It would be surprising if the attraction of this yield spread could be resisted for very long.

The second source of support for foreign markets has been the leveraged carry trades funded in yen. There are no reliable figures to show how large these trades have been, but anecdotal evidence suggests that they have been huge at times in the past 18 months.

The same anecdotal evidence indicates that these trades may not have been so large in recent months, with many hedge funds switching their funding into Swiss francs instead of yen. But anyway the remaining trades in this area seem unlikely to be seriously threatened until the market comes to expect an imminent increase in interest rates by the Bank of Japan. With the fiscal stance set to tighten by almost 2 per cent of GDP in April, this does not seem very probable.

This leaves the third main source, the official purchases of foreign assets (mainly US bonds) by the Japanese government.

These are the counterpart of the programme of foreign exchange intervention by the Bank of Japan designed to push the yen down. In recent months, with the yen having depreciated to around 115 against the dollar, official outflows have dropped sharply to an annual rate of only about \$10bn.

However, if other forms of capital outflow were to dry up, leading to a renewed strengthening in the yen, there is little doubt that the Bank of Japan would enter the market again to compensate.

Hence, even if private flows were suddenly reversed, the overall capital outflow would stay high until the central bank was ready to see the yen appreciating again against foreign currencies.

And that will not happen until there is clear evidence that the recovery in the Japanese economy can be sustained in the face of the fiscal tightening that is now due.

This raises the question of why the Japanese government is imposing such a large budgetary tightening on an economy which is only just beginning to recover from its worst recession for decades, and in which the balance sheets of the main financial institutions are still very fragile. The reason became a little clearer recently with the publication of an interesting paper by Kenji Okamura of the IMF on the long-term fiscal challenge facing Japan. This makes rather dire reading, suggesting that the fiscal stance is at present totally unsustainable, with the present policy settings likely to lead to an explosion in the public sector debt/GDP over the next several decades.

The primary source of the problem is de-

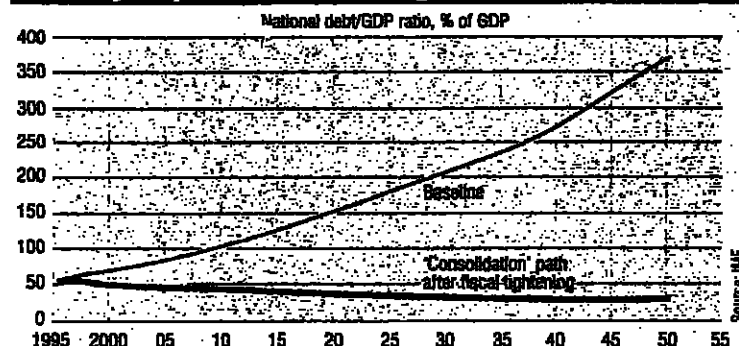
mography, with the ratio of retired people to the working population being set to rise from 20 per cent now to about 30 per cent by 2040, an ageing problem more severe than that faced by any other developed economy. This has two unpleasant consequences. First, and most obviously, the burden of social security will rise by at least 2 per cent of GDP, even after recent pension reforms, by 2025.

Second, the shrinkage of the working population will reduce the growth of potential output in the economy from around 4 per cent in the late 1980s to only 1 per cent per annum in the second decade of the next century. This collapse in GDP growth will clearly make it much harder to control the rise in public debt in the years ahead.

Added to these long-term difficulties is the fact that the recent recession has left the Japanese government with a core structural budget deficit – ignoring the one-off special supplementary budgets of emergency spending measures – of 3 per cent of GDP which needs to be addressed as well. According to the IMF calculations, a fiscal retrenchment of 4 per cent of GDP is needed immediately to restore the public accounts to a sustainable position, on top of the 2 per cent of GDP package which is planned for fiscal 1997. If these extra measures are delayed, then the required future tightening will inexorably rise, reflecting the further build-up in debt interest which will be allowed to occur.

Faced with this bleak arithmetic, it is easy to understand why the Ministry of Finance in Tokyo is so eager to embark on fiscal tightening this year. And that in turn means that the Bank of Japan will be forced to keep the monetary pumps switched on for some time yet.

Why Japan needs to tighten fiscal policy



US builder to assemble yachts in Kent as boating market gets its second wind

Peter Rodgers

Up to 400 jobs could be created by the first inward investment in the UK by a foreign yacht-building company.

It emerged yesterday at the London Boat Show that Hunter

Marine, a big US boat builder, is expected to use a site in Kent which will initially employ 200 to assemble yachts. It is planned to build up to a staff of 400 within five years.

Tony Beechey, chairman of the British Marine Industries

Federation, said Spain had also been trying to attract the Hunter factory: 'I have been working at it for a year. I think we will beat the Spanish.'

Two ministers from the Department of Trade & Industry – Ian Lang, the Secretary of

State, and Richard Page – visited the boat show at Earl's Court to talk to Hunter Marine about the project.

Mr Beechey said he did not know of any other foreign yacht builder that had set up a plant in the UK.

Hunter Marine markets sailing yachts under the Legend name in the UK to avoid confusion with a British boat builder called Hunter. It also makes Silverton and Mainship powerboats.

Imported Legends have been

selling well in the UK but the main target of the new factory is expected to be the continental European market.

Meanwhile, the boating industry appears to be recovering even faster than the housing market, with double-digit in-

creases in sales last year for the first time since the 1980s boom, Mr Beechey said. The increase of more than 10 per cent is thought to have taken sales above £2.1bn in 1996, compared with £1.9bn in 1995.

Mr Beechey said the im-

provement was because of the general level of confidence coming back into the economy.

He said there was no repeat of the extravagant spending on very expensive yachts seen during the 1980s, so the industry's recovery was sounder this time.

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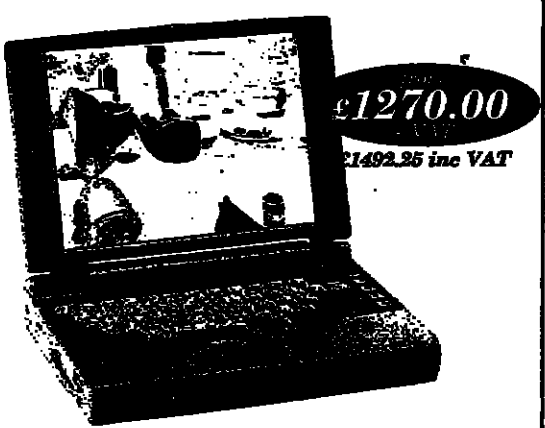


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science

Fusion: do we have the spark?

The holy grail of power sources remains a money-hungry and frustratingly elusive beast. Charles Arthur tracks its progress

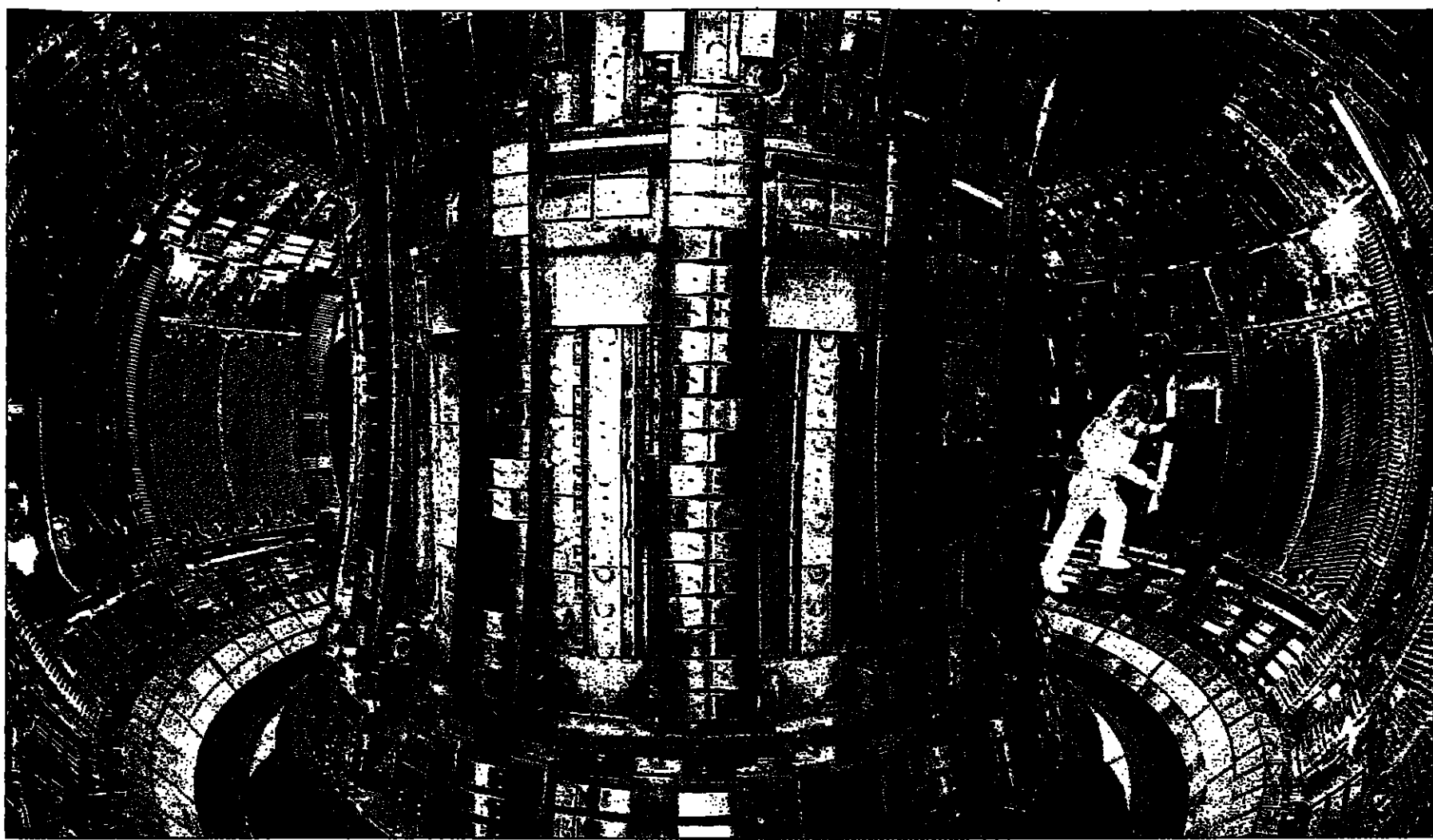
Will fusion ever be a viable source of energy? It's a question causing a great deal of turbulence in the fusion community. A proposed new £4 billion fusion reactor, called Iter, would never work, according to recent theoretical research from the US.

The research, by a joint team from the University of Texas and Princeton University, suggests that inside a reactor large enough to generate power by fusion, the random motions of the superheated hydrogen "plasma" would reduce its efficiency so much that Iter (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor) "wouldn't work, and by a substantial number", according to Michael Kotschenreuther of the University of Texas.

But that claim has been disputed. "In the past, no theoretical model has effectively predicted the future," said Miklos Porkolab, director of the Plasma Fusion Centre at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. While the scientists row, it's clear that the political will to back fusion, which has swallowed up truly tremendous amounts of money in the past 50 years, remains firm. Only last week, the European Commission issued a statement, based on an internal evaluation report, which said that "to maintain Europe's leading position in fusion research, Iter should be built in Europe." It gets better, in political terms - Italy has expressed interest in being the reactor's host country.

The cynic's view of fusion as a power source might borrow a famous economist's remark about the stability of the Brazilian economy: "It lies in the future, and always will do."

Leaving that question aside for a



The chamber made: the successor to the Jet reactor, with its intricate workings, may have to have a volume eight times larger to attain ignition

moment, controlled fusion reactors would be the answer to many prayers.

Fusion is the process that powers the sun. The simplest form crashes hydrogen atoms together to produce helium and, crucially, some energy. While the centre of the sun is dense enough and hot enough to power the process using pure hydrogen, a fusion reactor on Earth would have to operate using a mixture of deuterium and tritium - hydrogen atoms with, respectively, one and two neutrons in their nuclei.

At the right temperature and density, the electrostatic repulsion of the hydrogen nuclei is overcome by the "strong nuclear force", and the deuterium nucleus fuses with a tritium nucleus to produce a helium nucleus (two protons and two neutrons), while giving off a neutron and a burst of energy.

In principle, enough energy can be produced to make the reaction self-sustaining: the important thing is to get to a high enough value of what physicists call the "triple prod-

uct" - the multiple of the temperature, particle density and time - to continue the reaction. The temperature must be between 100 and 200 million degrees Centigrade; the density at least 2×10^{21} particles per cubic metre; and the reaction time at least 1 second. Ignition follows and everyone cracks open the champagne.

So far, nobody has managed that. They are coming closer, though. In 1991, the Joint European Torus (JET) at Culham, near Oxford, produced a triple product only six times too low to reach ignition. That may sound like a long way off, except that eight years before that, the state of the art rested 700 times away from the magic number. And in reaching that one-sixth figure, the plasma in the JET generated a 1.7 megawatts for about two seconds - the first time a significant amount of fusion power had been generated in a magnetic confinement device. It was still, however, far short of the amount of energy poured in.

The problem with achieving igni-

tion is that at such high temperatures, the hydrogen turns to plasma and has to be heated and held in an electromagnetic "bottle" by processes which require vast amounts of energy. Whenever JET is about to run a major experiment, it has to alert the National Grid, lest lights dim all over Oxfordshire.

The physics of confinement, and of the motion of the particles, is so incredibly complex that it has taken 50 years to get to a point where success - a commercial fusion reactor - is still 50 years away. And if the predictions of the turbulence effects are correct, it's even further off. William Dorland, who did some of the new work, told *Physics World*: "It's good news, bad news and extra good news. The good news is that fusion physicists for the first time really understand something about the process of turbulence. The bad is that the present operating mode for Iter wouldn't meet expectations by a large margin. The extra good news is that once physicists understand a phe-

nomenon, they can exploit that to make the machine better."

If fusion could work, it has huge advantages over fission, and indeed most other electricity fuels. The sources won't run out soon. The lifetime electricity requirement of the average person in an industrialised country could be provided by 10 grams of deuterium (which can be extracted from 500 litres of water) and 15g of tritium (produced from 30g of lithium, which is plentiful in the Earth's crust).

It wouldn't contribute to the greenhouse effect or other atmospheric pollution. Malfunction would lead to a shutdown, rather than a "runaway". Finally, while spare neutrons will create some radioactivity in the reactor structure, it will have a short half-life, and won't require the geological timespans of disposal required for fission waste.

But fusion, or at least ignition, remains an incredibly elusive target. Europe remains in the lead in research, having in the past 10 years put eight billion ecu (about £10.6 bil-

lion) into projects such as JET. "JET will continue until the end of this century and maybe into the next," says Martin Keilhacker, director of JET, where another series of experiments will begin in a few weeks' time, after rebuilding last year. He says that approaching ignition is a process of diminishing returns; to achieve it would require a reactor twice as big in each dimension. That means it would have a volume eight times bigger than JET's: the cost would probably be 10 times greater.

Iter, if it works, would aim eventually to burn hydrogen for about an hour: a subsequent reactor would aim for continuous operation. The step after that would be a commercial fusion reactor - but that, says Professor Keilhacker, is "probably 50 years or so from now".

This raises the question - how can we be sure that the political will to build fusion reactors will remain? "It is politically difficult," says Professor Keilhacker. "The timescale goes beyond that of physicists or engineers - and especially of politicians."

technoquest

Questions and answers provided by Science Line's Data Scientists on 0345 600 444

Q What causes the seasons?

A They are NOT caused by the distance of the Earth from the Sun. Otherwise how could Australia have summer when Britain has winter? It's because the Earth's axis is tilted. It runs from the north to the south pole. This axis is tilted by 23.5 degrees to the imaginary plane on which all the planets orbit the Sun. At the Earth's orbit, this tilt rotates around a vertical line to the plane of orbit. So when we have winter, the tilt of our hemisphere is away from the Sun. Ironically, the elliptical orbit means we are actually closest to the Sun when we have winter in the northern hemisphere. But the axis is tilted away, so the sunlight strikes the northern hemisphere at a lower angle. Summer is warmer because the rays from the Sun penetrate the atmosphere more directly.

Q What's the big crunch theory in astronomy?

A Physicists hold that if the universe contains enough matter, then its present expansion - the result of the original "singularity" or Big Bang - will one day be halted by the gravity of all its matter, and then begin to contract. This will culminate in a "Big Crunch" in which all matter is crushed out of existence.

The key unanswered question is: does the universe contain enough matter to cause this, or will it just continue expanding forever?

Q Why does an egg that has gone 'bad' float?

A As soon as an egg is laid, it starts to lose moisture through its shell. This moisture is replaced by air which makes the air sac in the egg larger and the egg less dense. At the same time, proteins in the egg white denature, breaking up to produce hydrogen sulphide - giving the egg its pungent 'rot' smell. This gas also makes the egg lighter. Hence it floats where a fresh one won't.

Q When you exercise, does the blood supply to the brain increase or decrease?

A Neither: it stays the same. The average heart pumps five litres of blood around the resting body every minute. Around 750 millilitres of this go to the brain and 600 millilitres to the muscles being used. When you exercise, the heart works harder - shifting a staggering 17 litres around the body. Of this, 14,000 millilitres go to the muscles, but 750 millilitres still go to the brain.

You can visit the technoquest World Wide Web site at: <http://www.compuserve.com/compuserve/technoquest>. Questions for this column can be submitted by e-mail to chris@bbs.org.

theoretically...

Don't peel that grape. A team at the University of Illinois at Chicago reckons that a substance called resveratrol, found in grape skins, may prevent cells turning cancerous and inhibit the spread of cells which are already malignant.

The team conducted hundreds of tests looking for anti-cancer compounds in foods that were widely available. In a study published in the latest *Science* magazine, they found that the grape came out best. But now the provisos: resveratrol has been tested only in cell cultures and laboratory animals. Still, the results offer the promise eventually of developing pills that will defend against cancer.

The disease-causing effects of the BRCA2 breast cancer gene depend on where it is mutated, according to researchers at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge. Mutations toward the middle

of the gene, discovered in 1995, predispose a woman more to ovarian than breast cancer.

The finding could help refine genetic tests, making them better predictors of whether a woman with a family history of breast cancer will get the disease. "This observation may ultimately be important in the counselling of women at risk of cancer due to BRCA2," said Simon Gayther in the January issue of *Nature Genetics*.

Perhaps PrP - the protein which in its "rogue" form causes mad cow disease and CJD - normally plays a role in the immune system, suggest a team at the Institute for Animal Health in Edinburgh. They compared ordinary mice with others that lacked the gene that codes for PrP, and found that normal mice produced up to twice as many T-cells (white blood cells essential to the immune operation) as those lacking prions.

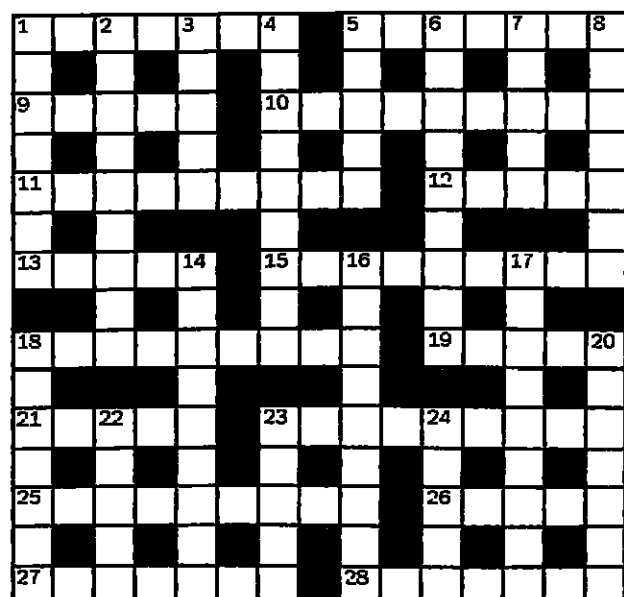
Is the universe structured like a giant honeycomb, with clusters of galaxies dotted through a regular pattern of voids? That's the idea put forward by an international team whose findings - that there are star systems roughly every 391 million light years - have surprised others. The study, in last week's *Nature*, revealed "a quasi-regular, three-dimensional" pattern in the distribution of galaxies.

Albert Einstein, a scientist you may have heard of, apparently calculated the possibility of "gravitational lensing" - the perceived bending of light from a distant star by the gravity of a nearer, more massive object - in 1912, almost 24 years before he wrote a paper on the topic. A reconstruction of early research notes has found that Einstein discarded the idea as something that couldn't be confirmed empirically. But lensing is an important astrophysical consequence of his general theory of relativity, published in 1915; and it was confirmed by observation in 1979.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No 3194, Monday 13 January

By Portia



ACROSS

- Why get punishment (4,3)
- There's little to be said for this role (3,4)
- I almost despair of finding shelter (5)
- More or less fair amateur contest (4,5)
- Latin poet's broken promise (9)
- Sounds like recognised situation (5)
- The wrong way to catch champion swimmer (5)

DOWN

- Switch energy into training dog (7)
- Everyone's now together, suddenly (3,2,5)
- Show disapproval of loud noise Pole makes (5)
- About to enter with the German's answer (9)
- Scholar's found by the Italian chap (5)
- Great delight as team leader managed to play (8)
- Only American's lot out, we hear (5)
- Child's effort is out of key and wobbly (7)
- Swears journalist is ringing carrier (9)
- Dispatch spring flowering plant (9)
- One lot aim to create upset (9)
- Fail to start following hesitation (7)
- Can't hear you give an opinion (5,2)
- Thus put in order for cleaning device (5)
- Old love bird swallowed one (5)
- Arrive on time and is travelling light, apparently (5)
- Find record remaining by the end of the day (9)
- Irregular lines? (4,5)
- In addition, money goes on second instruments (5)
- Figure lacking an element of colour (5)
- Fascinating look round Channel 4 (9)
- Take out one box inside that's different (9)
- Firm in Skelmersdale provides capital (5)

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